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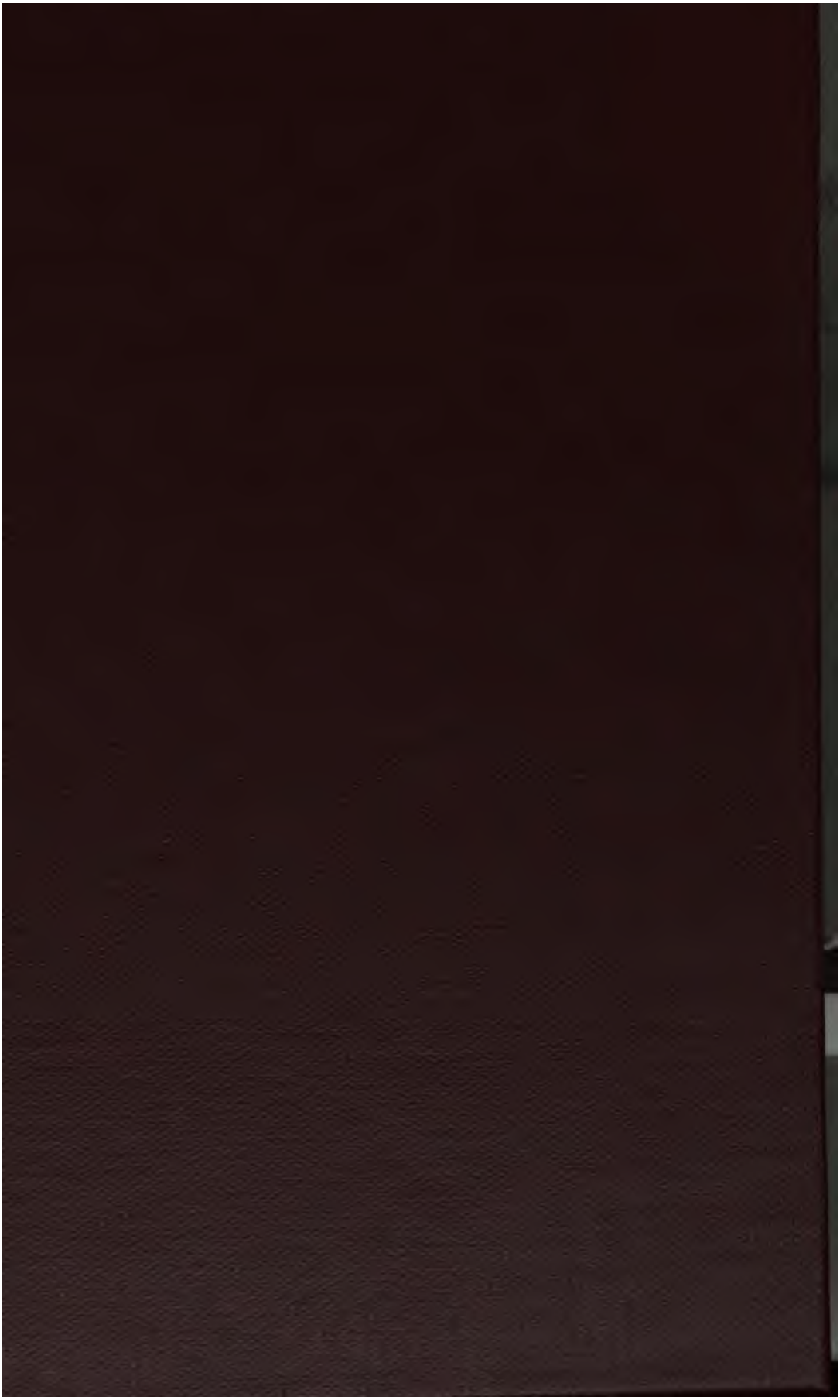

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# CORRESPONDENCE

## AND

# MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

# CORRESPONDENCE

# AND

# MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

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## DXCVIII

### AN ACCOUNT OF NEGOTIATIONS IN LONDON FOR EFFECTING A RECONCILIATION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE AMERICAN COLONIES

*(Continued.)*

The 9th article was so drawn, in compliance with an idea of Dr. Fothergill's, started at our first meeting, viz., that government here would probably not be satisfied with the promise of voluntary grants in time of war from the Assemblies, of which the quantity must be uncertain; that, therefore, it would be best to proportion them in some way to the shillings in the pound raised in England; but how such proportion could be ascertained he was at a loss to contrive. I was desired to consider it. It has been said, too, that Parliament was become jealous of the right claimed and heretofore used by the crown, of raising money in the colonies without parliamentary

consent; and, therefore, since we would not pay parliamentary taxes, future requisitions must be made with consent of Parliament, and not otherwise. I wondered that the crown should be willing to give up that separate right, but had no objection to its limiting itself, if it thought proper; so I drew the article accordingly, and contrived to proportion the aid by the tax of the last year of peace. And since it was thought that the method I should have liked best would never be agreed to, viz., a Continental Congress to be called by the crown, for answering requisitions and proportioning aids, I chose to leave room for voluntary additions by the separate Assemblies, that the crown might have some motive for calling them together, and cultivating their good-will, and they have some satisfaction in showing their loyalty and their zeal in the common cause, and an opportunity of manifesting their disapprobation of a war, if they did not think it a just one. This article therefore met with no objection *from them;* and I had another reason for liking it, viz., that the view of the proportion to be given in time of war might make us the more frugal in time of peace.

For the 10th article, I urged the injustice of seizing that fortress (which had been built at an immense charge by the province, for the defence of their port against national enemies), and turning it into a citadel for awing the town, restraining their trade, blocking up their port, and depriving them of their privileges. That a great deal had been said of their injustice in destroying the tea; but here was a much greater injustice uncompensated, that castle having

cost the province three hundred thousand pounds. And that such a use made of a fortress they had built would not only effectually discourage every colony from ever building another, and thereby leave them more exposed to foreign enemies, but was a good reason for their insisting that the crown should never erect any hereafter in their limits, without the consent of the legislature. The gentlemen had not much to say against this article, but thought it would hardly be admitted.

The 11th article, it was thought, would be strongly objected to; that it would be urged the old colonists could have nothing to do with the affairs of Canada, whatever we had with those of the Massachusetts; that it would be considered as an officious meddling merely to disturb government; and that some even of the Massachusetts acts were thought by administration to be improvements of that government, viz., those altering the appointment of counsellors, the choice of jurymen, and the forbidding of town meetings. I replied, that we having assisted in the conquest of Canada, at a great expense of blood and treasure, we had some right to be considered in the settlement of it. That the establishing an arbitrary government on the back of our settlements might be dangerous to us all; and that, loving liberty ourselves, we wished it to be extended among mankind, and to have no foundation for future slavery laid in America. That, as to amending the Massachusetts government, though it might be shown that every one of these pretended amendments were real mischiefs, yet that charters being compacts between two

parties, the king and the people, no alteration could be made in them, even for the better, but by the consent of both parties. That the Parliament's claim and exercise of a power to alter our charters, which had always been deemed inviolable but for forfeiture, and to alter laws made in pursuance of these charters, which had received the royal approbation, and thenceforth deemed fixed and unchangeable, but by the powers that made them, had rendered all our constitution uncertain, and set us quite afloat. That as by claiming a right to tax us *ad libitum*, they deprived us of all property; so, by this claim of altering our laws and charters at will, they deprived us of all privilege and right whatever, but what we should hold at their pleasure. That this was a situation we could not be in, and must risk life and every thing rather than submit to it. So this article remained.

The 12th article I explained by acquainting the gentlemen with the former situation of the judges in most colonies, viz., that they were appointed by the crown, and paid by the assemblies. That the appointment being during the pleasure of the crown the salary had been during the pleasure of the Assembly. That, when it has been urged against the Assemblies that their making judges dependent on them for their salaries was aiming at an undue influence over the courts of justice; the Assemblies usually replied that making them dependent on the crown for continuance in their places was also retaining an undue influence over those courts, and that one undue influence was a proper balance for the

other; but that whenever the crown would consent to acts making the judges during *good behavior*, the Assemblies would at the same time grant their salaries to be permanent during their continuance in office. This the crown has, however, constantly refused. And this equitable offer is now again here proposed; the colonies not being able to conceive why their judges should not be rendered as independent as those in England. That, on the contrary, the crown now claimed to make the judges in the colonies dependent on its favor for both place and salary, both to be continued at its pleasure. This the colonies must oppose as inequitable, as putting both the weights into one of the scales of justice. If, therefore, the crown does not choose to commission the judges during good behavior, with equally permanent salaries, the alternative proposed that the salaries continue to be paid during the pleasure of the Assemblies as heretofore. The gentlemen allowed this article to be reasonable.

The 13th was objected to, as nothing was generally thought more reasonable here than that the king should pay his own governor, in order to render him independent of the people, who otherwise might aim at influencing him against his duty by occasionally withholding his salary. To this I answered that governors sent to the colonies were often men of no estate or principle, who came merely to make fortunes, and had no natural regard for the country they were to govern. That to make them quite independent of the people was to make them careless of their conduct, whether it was beneficial or mischievous to

the public, and giving a loose to their rapacious and oppressive dispositions. That the influence supposed could never extend to operate any thing prejudicial to the king's service, or the interest of Britain; since the governor was bound by a set of particular instructions, which he had given surety to observe; and all the laws he assented to were subject to be repealed by the crown, if found improper. That the payment of the salaries by the people was more satisfactory to them, as it was productive of a good understanding and mutual good offices between governor and governed, and therefore the innovation lately made in that respect at Boston and New York had, in my opinion, better be laid aside. So this article was suffered to remain.

But the 14th was thought totally inadmissible. The monopoly of the American commerce could never be given up, and proposing it would only give offence without answering any good purpose. I was therefore prevailed on to strike it wholly out.

The 15th was readily agreed to.

The 16th it was thought would be of little consequence, if the duties were given to the colony treasuries.

The 17th it was thought could hardly be obtained, but might be tried.

Thus having gone through the whole, I was desired to make a fair copy for Dr. Fothergill, who now informed us that having an opportunity of seeing daily Lord Dartmouth, of whose good disposition he had a high opinion, he would communicate the paper to him, as the sentiments of considerate persons, who

wished the welfare of both countries. "Suppose," said Mr. Barclay, "I were to show this paper to Lord Hyde; would there be any thing amiss in so doing? He is a very knowing man; and, though not in the ministry, properly speaking, he is a good deal attended to by them. I have some acquaintance with him; we converse freely sometimes; and, perhaps, if he and I were to talk these articles over, and I should communicate to him our conversation upon them, some good might arise out of it." Dr. Fothergill had no objection, and I said I could have none. I knew Lord Hyde a little, and had an esteem for him. I had drawn the paper at their request, and it was now theirs to do with it what they pleased. Mr. Barclay then proposed that I should send the fair copy to him, which, after making one for Dr. Fothergill and one for himself, he would return to me. Another question then arose, whether I had any objection to their mentioning that I had been consulted. I said none that related to myself; but it was my opinion, if they wished any attention paid to the propositions, it would be better not to mention me; the ministry having, as I conceived, a prejudice against me, and every thing that came from me. They said on that consideration it might be best not to mention me; and so it was concluded. For my own part, I kept this whole proceeding a profound secret; but I soon after discovered that it had taken air by some means or other.

Being much interrupted the day following, I did not copy and send the paper. The next morning I

received a note [1] from Mr. Barclay, pressing to have it before twelve o'clock. I accordingly sent it to him. Three days after I received the following note from him:

"D. Barclay presents his respects, and acquaints Dr. Franklin that, being informed a pamphlet, entitled 'A Friendly Address,' has been dispersed to the *disadvantage* of America (in particular by the Dean of Norwich), he desires Dr. F. will peruse the enclosed, just come to hand from America, and, if he approves of it, republish it, as D. B. wishes something might be properly spread in Norwich. D. B. saw to-day a person with whom he had been yesterday (before he called on Dr. F.), and had the satisfaction of walking part of the way with him to another noble person's house, to meet on the *business*, and he told him that he could say that he saw some *light*.

"*Cheapside, 11th instant.*"

The person so met and accompanied by Mr. Barclay I understood to be Lord Hyde, going either to Lord Dartmouth's or Lord North's, I know not which.

In the following week arrived the proceedings of the Congress, which had been long and anxiously expected, both by the friends and adversaries of America.

[1] Dec. 8th. D. Barclay presents his respects to Dr. Franklin and requests to receive the paper to-day by 12 o'clock, if he can furnish it with conveniency, otherwise as soon after as best suits him.

The petition of Congress to the king was enclosed to me, and accompanied by the following letter from their president, addressed to the American agents in London, as follows:

"*To Paul Wentworth, Esquire, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, William Bollan, Esquire, Dr. Arthur Lee, Thomas Life, Esquire, Edmund Burke, Esquire, Charles Garth, Esquire.*

"PHILADELPHIA, October 26, 1774.

"GENTLEMEN:—We give you the strongest proof of our reliance on your zeal and attachment to the happiness of America, and the cause of liberty, when we commit the enclosed papers to your care.

"We desire you will deliver the petition into the hands of his Majesty, and after it has been presented, we wish it may be made public through the press, together with the list of grievances. And as we hope for great assistance from the spirit, virtue, and justice of the nation, it is our earnest desire that the most effectual care be taken, as early as possible, to furnish the trading cities and manufacturing towns throughout the United Kingdom with our memorial to the people of Great Britain.

"We doubt not but that your good sense and discernment will lead you to avail yourselves of every assistance that may be derived from the advice and friendship of all great and good men who may incline to aid the cause of liberty and mankind.

"The gratitude of America, expressed in the enclosed vote of thanks, we desire may be conveyed

to the deserving objects of it, in the manner that you think will be most acceptable to them.[1]

"It is proposed that another Congress be held on the 10th of May next, at this place, but in the meantime we beg the favor of you, gentlemen, to transmit to the Speakers of the several Assemblies, the earliest information of the most authentic accounts you can collect, of all such conduct and designs of ministry or Parliament, as it may concern America to know. We are, with unfeigned esteem and regard, gentlemen, etc. By order of the Congress.

"HENRY MIDDLETON, *President.*"

The first impression made by the proceedings of the American Congress on the people in general, was greatly in our favor. Administration seemed to be staggered, were impatient to know whether the *Petition* mentioned in the proceedings was come to my hands, and took a roundabout method of obtaining that information, by getting a ministerial merchant, a known intimate of the Solicitor-General, to write me a letter, importing that he heard I had received such a petition, that I was to be attended in presenting it by the merchants, and begging to know the time, that he might attend "on so important an occasion, and give his testimony to so good a work." Before these proceedings arrived, it had been given

[1] This vote of thanks was as follows: "October 25, 1774. *Resolved*, That this Congress, in their own names, and in the behalf of all those whom they represent, do present their most grateful acknowledgments to those truly noble, honorable, and patriotic advocates of civil and religious liberty, who have so generously and powerfully, though unsuccessfully, espoused and defended the cause of America, both in and out of Parliament."—EDITOR.

out that no petition from the Congress could be received, as they were an illegal body; but the Secretary of State after a day's perusal (during which a council was held), told us it was a decent and proper petition, and cheerfully undertook to present it to his Majesty, who, he afterwards assured us, was pleased to receive it very graciously, and to promise to lay it, as soon as they met, before his two Houses of Parliament; and we had reason to believe that, at that time, the petition was intended to be made the foundation of some change of measures; but that purpose, if such there were, did not long continue.

About this time, I received a letter from Mr. Barclay, then at Norwich, dated December 18th, expressing his opinion, that it might be best to postpone taking any further steps in the affair of procuring a meeting and petition of the merchants, (on which we had had several consultations,) till after the holidays, thereby to give the proceedings of Congress more time to work upon men's minds; adding: "I likewise consider that our superiors will have some little time for reflection, and perhaps may contemplate on the propriety of the 'HINTS' in their possession. By a few lines I have received from Lord Hyde, he intimates his hearty wish that they may be productive of what may be practicable and advantageous for the mother country and the colonies."

On the 22d, Mr. Barclay was come to town, when I dined with him, and learnt that Lord Hyde thought the propositions too hard.

On the 24th, I received the following note from a considerable merchant in the city, viz.:

"MR. WILLIAM NEATE presents his most respectful compliments to Dr. Franklin, and, as a report prevailed yesterday evening that all the disputes between Great Britain and the American colonies were, through his application and influence with Lord North, amicably settled, conformable to the wish and desire of the late Congress, W. N. desires the favor of Dr. Franklin to inform him by a line, per the bearer, whether there is any credit to be given to the report.

"*St. Mary Hill, 24th December, 1774.*"

My answer was to this effect; that I should be very happy to be able to inform him that the report he had heard had some truth in it; but I could only assure him that I knew nothing of the matter. Such reports, however, were confidently circulated, and had some effect in recovering the stocks, which had fallen three or four per cent.

On Christmas-day, visiting Mrs. Howe, she told me as soon as I came in, that her brother, Lord Howe, wished to be acquainted with me; that he was a very good man, and she was sure we should like each other. I said I had always heard a good character of Lord Howe, and should be proud of the honor of being known to him. "He is but just by," said she; "will you give me leave to send for him?" "By all means, madam, if you think proper." She rang for a servant, wrote a note, and Lord Howe came in a few minutes.

After some extremely polite compliments as to the general motives for his desiring an acquaintance with

me, he said he had a particular one at this time, which was the alarming situation of our affairs with America, which no one, he was persuaded, understood better than myself; that it was the opinion of some friends of his that no man could do more towards reconciling our differences than I could, if I would undertake it; that he was sensible that I had been very ill-treated by the ministry, but he hoped that would not be considered by me in the present case; that he himself, though not in opposition, had much disapproved of their conduct towards me; that some of them, he was sure, were ashamed of it and sorry it had happened; which he supposed must be sufficient to abate resentment in a great and generous mind; that, if he were himself in administration, he should be ready to make me ample satisfaction, which, he was persuaded, would one day or other be done; that he was unconnected with the ministry, except by some personal friendships, wished well, however, to government, was anxious for the general welfare of the whole empire, and had a particular regard for New England, which had shown a very endearing respect to his family; that he was merely an independent member of Parliament, desirous of doing what good he could, agreeably to his duty in that station; that he therefore had wished for an opportunity of obtaining my sentiments on the means of reconciling our differences, which he saw must be attended with the most mischievous consequences, if not speedily accommodated; that he hoped his zeal for the public welfare would, with me, excuse the impertinence of a mere stranger, who

could have otherwise no reason to expect, or right to request, me to open my mind to him on these topics; but he did conceive that, if I would indulge him with my ideas of the means proper to bring about a reconciliation, it might be of some use; that perhaps I might not be willing myself to have any *direct* communication with this ministry on this occasion; that I might likewise not care to have it known that I had any *indirect* communication with them, till I could be well assured of their good dispositions; that, being himself upon no ill terms with them, he thought it not impossible that he might, by conveying my sentiments to them and theirs to me, be a means of bringing on a good understanding, without committing either them or me, if his negotiation should not succeed; and that I might rely on his keeping perfectly secret every thing I should wish to remain so.

Mrs. Howe here offering to withdraw, whether of herself, or from any sign by him, I know not, I begged she might stay, as I should have no secret in a business of this nature that I could not freely confide to her prudence; which was truth; for I had never conceived a higher opinion of the discretion and excellent understanding of any woman on so short an acquaintance. I added that, though I had never before the honor of being in his lordship's company, his manner was such as had already engaged my confidence, and would make me perfectly easy and free in communicating myself to him.

I begged him, in the first place, to give me credit for a sincere desire of healing the breach between the two countries; that I would cheerfully and heartily

do every thing in my small power to accomplish it; but that I apprehended from the king's speech, and from the measures talked of, as well as those already determined on, no intention or disposition of the kind existed in the present ministry, and therefore no accommodation could be expected till we saw a change. That, as to what his Lordship mentioned of the *personal injuries* done me, those done my country were so much greater, that I did not think the other, at this time, worth mentioning; that, besides, it was a fixed rule with me, not to mix my private affairs with those of the public; that I could join with my personal enemy in serving the public, or, when it was for its interest, with the public in serving that enemy; these being my sentiments, his lordship might be assured that no private considerations of the kind should prevent my being as useful in the present case as my small ability would permit.

He appeared satisfied and pleased with these declarations, and gave it me as his sincere opinion, that some of the ministry were extremely well disposed to any reasonable accommodation, preserving only the dignity of government; and he wished me to draw up in writing some propositions containing the terms on which I conceived a good understanding might be obtained and established, and the mode of proceeding to accomplish it; which propositions, as soon as prepared, we might meet to consider, either at his house, or at mine, or where I pleased; but, as his being seen at my house, or me at his, might, he thought, occasion some speculation, it was concluded to be best to meet at his sister's, who readily offered

her house for the purpose, and where there was a good pretense with her family and friends for my being often seen, as it was known we played together at chess. I undertook, accordingly, to draw up something of the kind; and so for that time we parted, agreeing to meet at the same place again on the Wednesday following.

I dined about this time by invitation with Governor Pownall. There was no company but the family; and after dinner we had a *tête-à-tête*. He had been in the opposition; but was now about making his peace, in order to come into Parliament upon ministerial interest, which I did not then know. He told me, what I had before been told by several of Lord North's friends, that the American measures were not the measures of that minister, nor approved by him; that, on the contrary, he was well disposed to promote a reconciliation upon any terms honorable to government; that I had been looked upon as the great fomenter of the opposition in America, and as a great adversary to any accommodation; that he, Governor P., had given a different account of me, and had told his lordship that I was certainly much misunderstood. From the governor's further discourse I collected, that he wished to be employed as an envoy or commissioner to America, to settle the differences, and to have me with him; but, as I apprehended there was little likelihood that either of us would be so employed by government, I did not give much attention to that part of his discourse.

I should have mentioned in its place (but one cannot recollect every thing in order), that, declining at

first to draw up the propositions desired by Lord Howe, I alleged its being unnecessary, since the Congress in their petition to the king, just then received and presented through Lord Dartmouth, had stated their grievances, and pointed out very explicitly what would restore the ancient harmony; and I read a part of the petition to show their good dispositions, which, being very pathetically expressed, seemed to affect both the brother and sister. But still I was desired to give my ideas of the steps to be taken, in case some of the propositions in the petition should not be thought admissible. And this, as I said before, I undertook to do.

I had promised Lord Chatham to communicate to him the first important news I should receive from America. I therefore sent him the proceedings of the Congress as soon as I received them; but a whole week passed after I received the petition, before I could, as I wished to do, wait upon him with it, in order to obtain his sentiments on the *whole;* for my time was taken up in meetings with the other agents to consult about presenting the petition, in waiting three different days with them on Lord Dartmouth, in consulting upon and writing letters to the Speakers of Assemblies, and other business, which did not allow me a day to go to Hayes.

At last, on Monday, the 26th, I got out, and was there about one o'clock. He received me with an affectionate kind of respect, that from so great a man was extremely engaging; but the opinion he expressed of the Congress was still more so. They had acted, he said, with so much temper, moderation, and

wisdom, that he thought it the most honorable assembly of statesmen since those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, in the most virtuous times. That there were not in their whole proceedings above one or two things he could have wished otherwise; perhaps but one, and that was their assertion that the keeping up a standing army in the colonies in time of peace, without consent of their legislatures, was against law. He doubted that was not well founded, and that the law alluded to did not extend to the colonies. The rest he admired and honored. He thought the petition decent, manly, and properly expressed. He inquired much and particularly concerning the state of America, the probability of their perseverance, the difficulties they must meet with in adhering for any long time to their resolutions, the resources they might have to supply the deficiency of commerce; to all which I gave him answers with which he seemed well satisfied. He expressed a great regard and warm affection for that country, with hearty wishes for their prosperity; and that government here might soon come to see its mistakes, and rectify them; and intimated that possibly he might, if his health permitted, prepare something for its consideration, when the Parliament should meet after the holidays; on which he should wish to have previously my sentiments.

I mentioned to him the very hazardous state I conceived we were in, by the continuance of the army in Boston; that whatever disposition there might be in the inhabitants to give no just cause of offence to the troops, or in the general to preserve order among

them, an unpremeditated, unforeseen quarrel might happen between perhaps a drunken porter and a soldier, that might bring on a riot, tumult, and bloodshed, and in its consequences produce a breach impossible to be healed; that the army could not possibly answer any good purpose *there*, and might be infinitely mischievous; that no accommodation could properly be proposed and entered into by Americans while the bayonet was at their breasts; that to have an agreement binding, all force should be withdrawn. His lordship seemed to think these sentiments had something in them that was reasonable.

From Hayes I went to Halstead, Mr. Sargent's place, to dine, intending thence to visit Lord Stanhope at Chevening; but hearing that his lordship and the family were in town, I stayed at Halstead all night, and the next morning went to Chislehurst to call upon Lord Camden, it being in my way to town. I met his lordship and family in two carriages just without his gate, going on a visit of congratulation to Lord Chatham and his lady, on the late marriage of their daughter to Lord Mahon, son of Lord Stanhope. The were to be back at dinner; so I agreed to go in, stay dinner, and spend the evening there, and not return to town till next morning. We had that afternoon and evening a great deal of conversation on American affairs, concerning which he was very inquisitive, and I gave him the best information in my power. I was charmed with his generous and noble sentiments; and had the great pleasure of hearing his full approbation of the proceedings of the Congress, the petition, etc., etc., of which, at his

request, I afterwards sent him a copy. He seemed anxious that the Americans should continue to act with the same temper, coolness, and wisdom with which they had hitherto proceeded in most of their public assemblies, in which case he did not doubt they would succeed in establishing their rights, and obtain a solid and durable agreement with the mother country; of the necessity and great importance of which agreement, he seemed to have the strongest impressions.

I returned to town the next morning, in time to meet at the hour appointed by Lord Howe. I apologized for my not being ready with the paper I had promised, by my having been kept longer than I intended in the country. We had, however, a good deal of conversation on the subject, and his lordship told me he could now assure me, of a certainty, that there was a sincere disposition in Lord North and Lord Dartmouth to accommodate the differences with America, and to listen favorably to any proposition that might have a probable tendency to answer that salutary purpose. He then asked me what I thought of sending some person or persons over, commissioned to inquire into the grievances of America upon the spot, converse with the leading people, and endeavor with them to agree upon some means of composing our differences. I said that a person of rank and dignity, who had a character of candor, integrity, and wisdom, might possibly, if employed in that service, be of great use.

He seemed to be of the same opinion, and that whoever was employed should go with a hearty

desire of promoting a sincere reconciliation, on the foundation of mutual interests and mutual goodwill; that he should endeavor, not only to remove their prejudices against government, but equally the prejudices of government against them, and bring on a perfect good understanding, etc. Mrs. Howe said: "I wish, brother, you were to be sent thither on such a service; I should like that much better than General Howe's going to command the army there." "I think, madam," said I, "they ought to provide for General Howe some more honorable employment." Lord Howe here took out of his pocket a paper, and offering it to me said, smiling: "If it is not an unfair question, may I ask whether you know any thing of this paper?" Upon looking at it, I saw it was a copy, in David Barclay's hand, of the "HINTS" before recited; and said that I had seen it; adding, a little after, that since I perceived his lordship was acquainted with the transaction, my concern in which I had understood was to have been kept a secret, I should make no difficulty in owning to him that I had been consulted on the subject, and had drawn up that paper. He said he was rather sorry to find that the sentiments expressed in it were mine, as it gave him less hopes of promoting, by my assistance, the wished-for reconciliation; since he had reason to think there was no likelihood of the admission of those propositions. He hoped, however, that I would reconsider the subject, and form some plan that would be acceptable here. He expatiated on the infinite service it would be to the nation, and the great merit in being instru-

mental in so good a work; that he should not think of influencing me by any selfish motive, but certainly I might with reason expect any reward in the power of government to bestow.

This to me was what the French vulgarly call *spitting in the soup*. However, I promised to draw some sketch of a plan, at his request, though I much doubted, I said, whether it would be thought preferable to that he had in his hand. But he was willing to hope that it would; and, as he considered my situation, that I had friends here and constituents in America to keep well with, that I might possibly propose something improper to be seen in my handwriting; therefore, it would be better to send it to Mrs. Howe, who would copy it, send the copy to him to be communicated to the ministry, and return me the original. This I agreed to, though I did not apprehend the inconvenience he mentioned. In general, I liked much his manner, and found myself disposed to place great confidence in him on occasion; but in this particular the secrecy he proposed seemed not of much importance.

In a day or two I sent the following paper, enclosed in a cover, directed to the Honorable Mrs. Howe.

"It is supposed to be the wish on both sides not merely to put a stop to the mischief at present threatening the general welfare, but to cement a *cordial union*, and remove, not only every real grievance, but every cause of jealousy and suspicion.

"With this view, the first thing necessary is to know

what is, by the different parties in the dispute, thought essentially necessary for the obtaining such a union.

"The American Congress, in their petition to the king, have been explicit, declaring that by a repeal of the oppressive acts therein complained of, *the harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, so necessary to the happiness of both, and so ardently desired of them, will, with the usual intercourse, be immediately restored.*

"If it has been thought reasonable here to expect that, previous to an alteration of measures, the colonies should make some declaration respecting their future conduct, they have also done that by adding: *That when the causes of their apprehensions are removed, their future conduct will prove them not unworthy of the regard they have been accustomed in their happier days to enjoy.*

"For their sincerity in these declarations, they solemnly call to witness the Searcher of all hearts.

"If Britain can have any reliance on these declarations (and perhaps none to be extorted by force can be more relied on than these, which are thus freely made), she may, without hazard to herself, try the expedient proposed, since, if it fails, she has it in her power at any time to resume her present measures.

"It is then proposed: That Britain should show some confidence in these declarations, by repealing all the laws, or parts of laws, that are requested to be repealed in the petition of the Congress to the king; And that, at the same time, orders should be given to withdraw the fleet from Boston, and remove all the

troops to Quebec, or the Floridas, that the colonies may be left at perfect liberty in their future stipulations.

"That this may, for the honor of Britain, appear not the effect of any apprehension from the measures entered into and recommended to the people by the Congress, but from good-will, and a change of disposition towards the colonies, with a sincere desire of reconciliation, let some of their other grievances, which in their petition they have left to the magnanimity and justice of the king and Parliament, be at the same time removed, such as those relating to the payment of governors' and judges' salaries, and the instructions for dissolving Assemblies, etc., with the declarations concerning the statute of Henry the Eighth.

"And to give the colonies an immediate opportunity of demonstrating the reality of their professions, let their proposed ensuing Congress be authorized by government (as was that held at Albany, in 1754), and a person of weight and dignity of character be appointed to preside at it on behalf of the crown.

"And then let requisition be made to the Congress, of such points as government wishes to obtain for its future security, for aids, for the advantage of general commerce, for reparation to the India Company, etc., etc.

"A generous confidence thus placed in the colonies, will give ground to the friends of government there, in their endeavors to procure from America every reasonable concession, or engagement, and every substantial aid, that can fairly be desired."

On the Saturday evening, I saw Mrs. Howe, who informed me she had transcribed and sent the paper to Lord Howe in the country, and she returned me the original. On the following Tuesday, January 3d, I received a note from her (enclosing a letter she had received from Lord Howe the last night), as follows:

"MRS. HOWE'S compliments to Dr. Franklin; she encloses him a letter she received last night, and returns him many thanks for his obliging present,[1] which has already given her great entertainment. If the Doctor has any spare time for chess, she will be exceedingly glad to see him any morning this week, and as often as will be agreeable to him, and rejoices in having so good an excuse for asking the favor of his company.

"*Tuesday.*"

"PORTER'S LODGE, January 2, 1775.

"*To The Honorable Mrs. Howe, Grafton Street.*

"I have received your packet; and it is with much concern that I collect, from sentiments of such authority as those of our worthy friend, that the desired accommodation threatens to be attended with much greater difficulty than I had flattered myself, in the progress of our intercourse, there would be reason to apprehend.

"I shall forward the propositions as intended, not desirous of trespassing further on our friend's indulgence; but retaining sentiments of regard, which his candid and obliging attention to my troublesome

[1] His Philosophical Writings.—W. T. F.

inquiries will render ever permanent to the memory of your affectionate, etc., HOWE.

"I ought to make excuses likewise to you."

His lordship had, in his last conversation with me, acknowledged a communication between him and the ministry, to whom he wished to make my sentiments known. In this letter from the country he owns the receipt of them, and mentions his intention of forwarding them, that is, as I understood it, to the ministers; but expresses his apprehensions that such propositions were not likely to produce any good effect. Some time after, perhaps a week, I received a note from Mrs. Howe, desiring to see me. I waited upon her immediately, when she showed me a letter from her brother, of which having no copy, I can only give from the best of my recollection the purport of it, which I think was this: that he desired to know from their friend, meaning me, through her means, whether it might not be expected that, if that friend would engage for their payment of the tea as a preliminary, relying on a promised redress of their grievances on future petitions from their Assembly, they would approve of his making such engagement; and whether the proposition in the former paper (the "HINTS"), relating to aids, was still in contemplation of the author. As Mrs. Howe proposed sending to her brother that evening, I wrote immediately the following answer, which she transcribed and forwarded:

"The proposition in the former paper, relating to

aids, is still in contemplation of the author, and, as he thinks, is included in the last article of the present paper.

"The people of America, conceiving that Parliament has no right to tax them, and that therefore all that has been extorted from them by the operation of the duty acts, with the assistance of an armed force, *preceding* the destruction of the tea, is so much injury, which ought in order of time to be first repaired, before a demand on the tea account can be justly made of them, are not, he thinks, likely to approve of the measure proposed, and pay *in the first place* the value demanded, especially as twenty times as much injury has since been done them by blocking up their port; and their castle also, seized before by the crown, has not been restored, nor any satisfaction offered them for the same."

At the meeting of Parliament after the holidays, which was on the 19th of January, 1775, Lord Howe returned to town, when we had another meeting at which he lamented that my propositions were not such as probably could be accepted; intimated, that it was thought I had powers or instructions from the Congress to make concessions on occasion, that would be more satisfactory. I disclaimed the having any of any kind, but what related to the presenting of their petition. We talked over all the particulars in my paper, which I supported with reasons; and finally said that, if what I had proposed would not do, I should be glad to hear what would do; I wished to see some propositions from the ministers them-

selves. His lordship was not, he said, as yet fully acquainted with their sentiments, but should learn more in a few days. It was, however, some weeks before I heard any thing further from him.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Barclay and I were frequently together on the affair of preparing the merchants' petition, which took up so much of his time that he could not conveniently see Lord Hyde; so he had no information to give me concerning the "HINTS," and I wondered I heard nothing of them from Dr. Fothergill. At length, however, but I cannot recollect about what time, the Doctor called on me, and told me he had communicated them, and with them had verbally given my arguments in support of them, to Lord Darmouth, who, after consideration, had told him some of them appeared reasonable, but others were inadmissible or impracticable. That having occasion to see frequently the Speaker,[1] he had also communicated them to him, as he found him very anxious for a reconciliation. That the Speaker had said it would be very humiliating to Britain to be obliged to submit to such terms; but the Doctor told him she had been unjust, and ought to bear the consequences, and alter her conduct; that the pill might be bitter, but it would be salutary, and must be swallowed. That these were the sentiments of impartial men, after thorough consideration and full information of all circumstances, and that sooner or later these or similar measures must be followed, or the empire would be divided and ruined. The Doctor, on the

[1] Sir Fletcher Norton.

whole, hoped some good would be effected by our endeavors.

On the 19th of January, I received a card from Lord Stanhope, acquainting me that Lord Chatham, having a motion to make on the morrow in the House of Lords concerning America, greatly desired that I might be in the House, into which Lord Stanhope would endeavor to procure me admittance. At this time it was a rule of the House that no person could introduce more than one friend. The next morning his lordship let me know by another card that, if I attended at two o'clock in the lobby, Lord Chatham would be there about that time, and would himself introduce me. I attended, and met him there accordingly. On my mentioning to him what Lord Stanhope had written to me, he said: "Certainly; and I shall do it with the more pleasure, as I am sure your being present at this day's debate will be of more service to America than mine"; and so taking me by the arm was leading me along the passage to the door that enters near the throne, when one of the door-keepers followed, and acquainted him that, by the order, none were to be carried in at that door but the eldest sons or brothers of peers; on which he limped back with me to the door near the bar, where were standing a number of gentlemen waiting for the peers who were to introduce them, and some peers waiting for friends they expected to introduce; among whom he delivered me to the door-keepers, saying aloud: "This is Dr. Franklin, whom I would have admitted into the House"; when they readily opened the door for me accordingly.

As it had not been publicly known that there was any communication between his lordship and me, this I found occasioned some speculation. His appearance in the House, I observed, caused a kind of bustle among the officers, who were hurried in sending messengers for members, I suppose those in connection with the ministry, something of importance being expected when that great man appears; it being but seldom that his infirmities permit his attendance. I had great satisfaction in hearing his motion and the debate upon it, which I shall not attempt to give here an account of, as you may find a better in the papers of the time. It was his motion for withdrawing the troops from Boston, as the first step towards an accommodation.

The day following, I received a note from Lord Stanhope expressing that, "at the desire of Lord Chatham, was sent me enclosed the motion he made in the House of Lords, that I might be possessed of it in the most authentic manner, by the communication of the individual paper which was read to the House by the mover himself." I sent copies of this motion to America, and was the more pleased with it, as I conceived it had partly taken its rise from a hint I had given his lordship in a former conversation. It follows in these words.

"LORD CHATHAM'S MOTION, JANUARY 20, 1775

"That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, most humbly to advise and beseech his Majesty that, in order to open the way towards a happy settlement of the dangerous troubles in America,

by beginning to allay ferments and soften animosities there, and above all, for preventing in the meantime any sudden and fatal catastrophe at Boston, now suffering under the daily irritation of an army before their eyes, posted in their town, it may graciously please his Majesty that immediate orders may be despatched to General Gage for removing his Majesty's forces from the town of Boston, as soon as the rigor of the season and other circumstances, indispensable to the safety and accommodation of the said troops, may render the same practicable."

I was quite charmed with Lord Chatham's speech in support of his motion. He impressed me with the highest idea of him, as a great and most able statesman.[1] Lord Camden, another wonderfully good speaker and close reasoner, joined him in the same argument, as did several other lords, who spoke exceedingly well, but all availed no more than the whistling of the winds. The motion was rejected. Sixteen Scotch peers, and twenty-four bishops, with all the lords in possession or expectation of places, when they vote together unanimously, as they generally do for ministerial measures, make a dead majority, that renders all debating ridiculous in itself, since it can answer no end. Full of the high esteem I had imbibed for Lord Chatham, I wrote back to Lord Stanhope the following note, viz.:

[1] It was reported at the time that his lordship had concluded his speech with the following remarkable words: "If the ministers thus persevere in *misadvising* and *misleading* the king, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown, but I will affirm that they will make the crown *not worth his wearing*. I will not say that the king is betrayed, but I will pronounce that *the kingdom is undone*."—W. T. F.

"Dr. Franklin presents his best respects to Lord Stanhope, with many thanks to his lordship and Lord Chatham for the communication of so authentic a copy of the motion. Dr. F. is filled with admiration of that truly great man. He has seen, in the course of life, sometimes eloquence without wisdom, and often wisdom without eloquence; in the present instance he sees both united, and both, as he thinks, in the highest degree possible.

"*Craven Street, January 23, 1775.*"

As in the course of the debate some lords in the administration had observed, that it was common and easy to censure their measures, but those who did so proposed nothing better, Lord Chatham mentioned that he should not be one of those idle censurers; that he had thought long and closely upon the subject, and proposed soon to lay before their lordships the result of his meditation, in a plan for healing our differences, and restoring peace to the empire, to which his present motion was preparatory. I much desired to know what his plan was, and intended waiting on him to see if he would communicate it to me, but he went the next morning to Hayes, and I was so much taken up with daily business and company that I could not easily get out to him. A few days after, however, Lord Mahon called on me, and told me Lord Chatham was very desirous of seeing me, when I promised to be with him the Friday following, several engagements preventing my going sooner.

On Friday the 27th I took a post-chaise about

nine o'clock and got to Hayes about eleven; but, my attention being engaged in reading a new pamphlet, the post-boy drove me a mile or two beyond the gate. His lordship, being out on an airing in his chariot, had met me before I reached Hayes, unobserved by me, turned and followed me, and not finding me there, concluded, as he had seen me reading, that I had passed by mistake, and sent a servant after me. He expressed great pleasure at my coming, and acquainted me, in a long conversation, with the outlines of his plan, parts of which he read to me. He said he had communicated it only to Lord Camden, whose advice he much relied on, particularly in the law part; and that he would, as soon as he could, get it transcribed, put it into my hands for my opinion and advice, but should show it to no other person before he presented it to the House; and he requested me to make no mention of it, otherwise parts might be misunderstood and blown upon beforehand, and others perhaps adopted and produced by ministers as their own. I promised the closest secrecy, and kept my word, not even mentioning to any one that I had seen him. I dined with him, his family only present, and returned to town in the evening.

On the Sunday following, being the 29th, his lordship came to town, and called upon me in Craven Street. He brought with him his plan, transcribed in the form of an act of Parliament, which he put into my hands, requesting me to consider it carefully, and communicate to him such remarks upon it as should occur to me. His reason for desiring to give me that trouble was, as he was pleased to say, that

he knew no man so thoroughly acquainted with the subject, or so capable of giving advice upon it; that he thought the errors of ministers in American affairs had been often owing to their not obtaining the best information; that, therefore, though he had considered the business thoroughly in all its parts, he was not confident of his own judgment, but that he came to set it right by mine, as men set their watches by a regulator. He had not determined when he should produce it in the House of Lords; but in the course of our conversation, considering the precarious situation of his health, and that if presenting it was delayed some intelligence might arrive which would make it seem less seasonable, or in all parts not so proper, or the ministry might engage in different measures, and then say: "If you had produced your plan sooner, we might have attended to it," he concluded to offer it the Wednesday following; and therefore wished to see me about it the preceding Tuesday, when he would again call upon me, unless I could conveniently come to Hayes. I chose the latter, in respect to his lordship, and because there was less likelihood of interruptions; and I promised to be with him early, that we might have more time. He stayed with me near two hours, his equipage waiting at the door; and being there while people were coming from church, it was much taken notice of, and talked of, as at that time was every little circumstance that men thought might possibly any way affect American affairs. Such a visit from so great a man, on so important a business, flattered not a little my vanity; and the honor of it gave me the

more pleasure, as it happened on the very day twelve months that the ministry had taken so much pains to disgrace me before the Privy Council.[1]

I applied myself immediately to the reading and considering the plan, of which, when it was afterwards published, I sent you a copy, and therefore need not insert it here. I put down upon paper, as I went along, some short memorandums for my future discourse with him upon it, which follow, that you may, if you please, compare them with the plan; and if you do so, you will see their drift and purpose, which otherwise would take me much writing to explain.

"NOTES FOR DISCOURSE WITH LORD CHATHAM ON HIS PLAN

"Tuesday, 31 January, 1775.

"Voluntary grants and forced taxes not to be expected of the same people at the same time.

"Permanent revenue will be objected to. Would not a temporary agreement be best, suppose for one hundred years?

"Does the whole of the rights claimed in the Petition of Rights relate to England only?

"The American Naturalization Act gives all the rights of natural-born subjects to foreigners residing there seven years. Can it be supposed, that the natives there have them not?

"If the king should raise armies in America, would Britain like their being brought hither? as the king might bring them when he pleased.

[1] In the affair of Hutchinson's letters.—EDITOR.

"An act of Parliament requires the colonies to furnish sundry articles of provision and accommodation to troops quartered among them; this may be made very burdensome to colonies that are out of favor.

"If a permanent revenue, why not the same privileges in trade with Scotland?

"Should not the lands, conquered by Britain and the colonies in conjunction, be given them (reserving a quit-rent), whence they might form funds to enable them to pay?

"Instructions about agents to be withdrawn.

"Grants to be for three years, at the end of which a new Congress; and so from three to three years.

"Congress to have the general defence of frontiers, making and regulating new settlements.

"Protection mutual.

"We go into all your wars.

"Our settlements cost you nothing.

"Take the plan of union.

"'Defence, extension, and prosperity of.' The late Canada Act prevents their extension, and may check their prosperity.

"Laws should be secure as well as charters.

"Perhaps if the legislative power of Parliament is owned in the colonies, they may make a law to forbid the meeting of any Congress," etc.

I was at Hayes early on Tuesday, agreeable to my promise, when we entered into consideration of the plan; but, though I stayed near four hours, his lordship, in the manner of, I think, all eloquent persons, was so full and diffuse in supporting every par-

ticular I questioned, that there was not time to go through half my memorandums. He is not easily interrupted, and I had such pleasure in hearing him that I found little inclination to interrupt him. Therefore, considering that neither of us had much expectation that the plan would be adopted entirely as it stood; that, in the course of its consideration, if it should be received, proper alterations might be introduced; that, before it would be settled, America should have opportunity to make her objections and propositions of amendment; that, to have it received at all here, it must seem to comply a little with some of the prevailing prejudices of the legislature; that, if it was not so perfect as might be wished, it would at least serve as a basis for treaty, and in the meantime prevent mischiefs; and that, as his lordship had determined to offer it the next day, there was not time to make changes and another fair copy, I therefore ceased my querying, and, though afterwards many people were pleased to do me the honor of supposing I had a considerable share in composing it, I assure you that the addition of a single word only was made at my instance, viz., "*constitutions*" after "charters"; for my filling up, at his request, a blank with the titles of acts proper to be repealed, which I took from the proceedings of the Congress, was no more than might have been done by any copying clerk.

On Wednesday, Lord Stanhope, at Lord Chatham's request, called upon me, and carried me down to the House of Lords, which was soon very full. Lord Chatham, in a most excellent speech, intro-

duced, explained, and supported his plan. When he sat down, Lord Dartmouth rose, and very properly said it contained matter of such weight and magnitude as to require much consideration; and he therefore hoped the noble earl did not expect their lordships to decide upon it by an immediate vote, but would be willing it should lie upon the table for consideration. Lord Chatham answered readily that he expected nothing more.

But Lord Sandwich rose, and in a petulant, vehement speech, opposed its being received at all, and gave his opinion that it ought to be immediately *rejected*, with the contempt it deserved; that he could never believe it to be the production of any British peer; that it appeared to him rather the work of some American; and turning his face towards me, who was leaning on the bar, said he fancied he had in his eye the person who drew it up, one of the bitterest and most mischievous enemies this country had ever known. This drew the eyes of many lords upon me, but as I had no inducement to take it to myself, I kept my countenance as immovable as if my features had been made of wood. Then several other lords of the administration gave their sentiments also for rejecting it, of which opinion also was strongly the *wise* Lord Hillsborough. But the Dukes of Richmond and Manchester, Lord Shelburne, Lord Camden, Lord Temple, Lord Lyttleton, and others, were for receiving it, some through approbation, and others for the character and dignity of the House. One lord mentioning with applause the candid proposal of one of the ministers, Lord Dartmouth, his

lordship rose again and said that, having since heard the opinions of so many lords against receiving it, to lie upon the table for consideration, he had altered his mind, could not accept the praise offered him for a candor of which he was now ashamed, and should therefore give his voice for rejecting the plan immediately.

I am the more particular in this, as it is a trait of that nobleman's character, who from his office is supposed to have so great a share in American affairs, but who has in reality no will or judgment of his own, being, with disposition for the best measures, easily prevailed with to join in the worst.

Lord Chatham, in his reply to Lord Sandwich, took notice of his liberal insinuation that the plan was not the person's who proposed it; declared that it was entirely his own; a declaration he thought himself the more obliged to make, as many of their lordships appeared to have so mean an opinion of it; for if it was so weak or so bad a thing, it was proper in him to take care that no other person should unjustly share in the censure it deserved. That it had been heretofore reckoned his vice, not to be apt to take advice; but he made no scruple to declare that if he were the first minister of this country, and had the care of settling this momentous business, he should not be ashamed of publicly calling to his assistance a person so perfectly acquainted with the whole of American affairs as the gentleman alluded to, and so injuriously reflected on; one, he was pleased to say, whom all Europe held in high estimation for his knowledge and wisdom, and ranked with our Boyles

and Newtons; who was an honor, not to the English nation only, but to human nature! I found it harder to stand this extravagant compliment than the preceding equally extravagant abuse; but kept as well as I could an unconcerned countenance, as not conceiving it to relate to me.

To hear so many of these *hereditary* legislators declaiming so vehemently against, not the adopting merely, but even the *consideration* of, a proposal so important in its nature, offered by a person of so weighty a character, one of the first statesmen of the age, who had taken up this country when in the lowest despondency, and conducted it to victory and glory through a war with two of the mightiest kingdoms in Europe; to hear them censuring his plan, not only for their own misunderstandings of what was in it, but for their imaginations of what was not in it, which they would not give themselves an opportunity of rectifying by a second reading; to perceive the total ignorance of the subject in some, the prejudice and passion of others, and the wilful perversion of plain truth in several of the ministers; and, upon the whole, to see it so ignominiously rejected by so great a majority, and so hastily too, in breach of all decency, and prudent regard to the character and dignity of their body, as a third part of the national legislature, gave me an exceeding mean opinion of their abilities, and made their claim of sovereignty over three millions of virtuous, sensible people in America seem the greatest of absurdities, since they appeared to have scarce discretion enough to govern a herd of swine. *Hereditary legislators!* thought I.

There would be more propriety, because less hazard of mischief, in having (as in some university of Germany) *hereditary professors of mathematics!* But this was a hasty reflection; for the *elected* House of Commons is no better, nor ever will it be while the electors receive money for their votes, and pay money wherewith ministers may bribe their representatives when chosen.[1]

[1] Franklin did not hesitate to speak of the House of Commons, even in letters of an official nature, as corrupt, but he never mentions any specific cases of corruption. As corruption is not apt to have witnesses who can afford to betray it, it is charged in many cases on suspicion, and oftentimes unjustly. To show that Franklin did not make such a charge merely upon rumors and suspicions, the attention of the reader is invited to the following extract from *Wraxall's Memoirs of His Own Time*, which will be found to justify much stronger language than Franklin ever used upon the subject:

"While I am engaged on the subject of the House of Commons, and of the influence or corruption by which it has been always managed, particularly during the last, and the present reign, I shall relate some particulars, which cannot perhaps be introduced with more propriety than in this place. We may see in the *Memoirs of Prince Eugene of Savoy* what influence he attributes to the 'Presents of Champagne and Burgundy' made by Marshal Tallard, then a prisoner of war in England, to 'Right Honorable Members of Parliament.' Nay, the Prince asserts positively that in the same year, 1711, when he came over in person to London, with the avowed object of retaining, if possible, Queen Anne and her Ministers in the Grand Alliance against France, he had recourse, himself, to corruption. '*Je fis des presents*,' says he, '*car on peut acheter beaucoup en Angleterre.*' If such constituted the ordinary practice under the last Princess of the Stuart Line, at a time that Parliaments were not septennial but only *triennial*, we may be quite assured that they did not become more virtuous after the accession of the reigning family, when the House of Commons was elected for seven years.

"Proofs of the venality practised by Sir Robert Walpole, during the whole course of his long administration, it seems unnecessary to produce, as that Minister did not disclaim or resent the imputation. Nor did his political adversaries disdain, whatever professions of public virtue they might make, to have recourse to the same unworthy expedients in order to effect his removal. We have the authority of a

After this proceeding I expected to hear no more of any negotiation for settling our difference amicably; yet, in a day or two, I had a note from Mr. Barclay, requesting a meeting at Doctor Fothergill's, the 4th of February, in the evening. I attended accordingly, and was surprised by being told that a very good disposition appeared in administration; that the "HINTS" had been considered and several of them thought reasonable, and that others

member of their own body for the fact. 'Don Carlos' (Frederick, Prince of Wales), says Mr. Glover, in his *Memoirs*, recently published, 'told me that it cost him twelve thousand pounds in corruption, particularly among the Tories, to carry the Westminster and Chippenham elections in 1742, and other points, which compelled Lord Orford, at that time Sir Robert Walpole, to quit the House of Commons.' It is difficult to adduce more satisfactory and unimpeachable proof of any fact, as Glover was a man of strict veracity. Neither was Mr. Pelham, who, after a short interval, succeeded Sir Robert, and who held his situation near eleven years, though he may be justly esteemed one of the most upright statesmen who presided in the councils of George the Second, less liable to the accusation of corrupting Parliament than his predecessor.

"A friend of mine, a man of rank and high character, whom I do not name, because, being still alive, I consider myself not at liberty to divulge it, but whose name would at once stamp the veracity and authenticity of whatever he relates, has frequently assured me that about the year 1767 he was personally acquainted with *Roberts*, who had been Secretary of the Treasury under Mr. Pelham, but who was then old, infirm, and near his end. He lies buried in Westminster Abbey, in Poets' Corner, where his epitaph describes him as 'the most faithful Secretary of the Right Honorable Henry Pelham.' This gentleman, conversing with Roberts upon the events of those times when he held a place under Administration, and particularly on the manner in which the House of Commons was then managed, Roberts avowed without reserve, that while he remained at the treasury, there were a number of members who regularly received from him their payment or stipend, at the end of every session, in bank notes. The sums, which varied according to the merits, ability, and attendance of the respective individuals, amounted usually from five hundred pounds to eight hundred pounds, *per annum*. 'This largess I distributed,' added Roberts,

might be admitted with small amendments. The good Doctor, with his usual philanthropy, expatiated on the miseries of war; that even a bad peace was preferable to the most successful war; that America was growing in strength; and, whatever she might be obliged to submit to at present, she would in a few years be in a condition to make her own terms.

Mr. Barclay hinted how much it was in my power

'in the Court of Requests, on the day of the prorogation of Parliament. I took my stand there, and as the gentlemen passed me, in going to or returning from the House, I conveyed the money in a squeeze of the hand. Whatever person received the ministerial bounty in the manner thus related, I entered his name in a book, which was preserved in the deepest secrecy, it being never inspected by any one, except the King and Mr. Pelham. On the decease of that Minister in 1754, his brother the Duke of Newcastle, Mr. Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, and others of the Cabinet who succeeded to power, anxious to obtain an accurate knowledge of the *private* state of the House of Commons, and particularly to ascertain the names of all the individuals who received money during Mr. Pelham's life, applied to me for information. They further demanded of me to surrender the book, in which, as they knew, I was accustomed to enter the above particulars. Conceiving a compliance to be dishonorable, I peremptorily refused to deliver it up, except by the King's express command, and to his Majesty in person. In consequence of my refusal, they acquainted the King of the circumstance, who sent for me to St. James', where I was introduced into the Closet, more than one of the above-mentioned Ministers being present. George the Second ordered me to return him the book in question, with which injunction I immediately complied. At the same time, taking the poker in his hand, he put it into the fire, made it red hot, and then, while we stood round him, he thrust the book into the flames, where it was immediately reduced to ashes. He considered it, in fact, as too sacred and confidential a register, to be thus transferred over to the new Ministers, and as having become extinct with the administration of Mr. Pelham.'

"It is unquestionable that the Duke of Newcastle, though he failed in getting possession of his brother's secret information, in consequence of Roberts's firmness, yet pursued the same mode of management on becoming himself First Lord of the Treasury. Under Lord Bute's

to promote an agreement, how much it would be to my honor to effect it, and that I might expect, not only restoration of my old place, but almost any other I could wish for, etc. I need not tell you, who know me so well, how improper and disgusting this language was to me. The Doctor's was more suitable. Him I answered that we did not wish for war, and desired nothing but what was reasonable and necessary for our security and well-being. To Mr.

government, when, from a variety of causes, a violent opposition in Parliament arose, which required the whole power of Ministry to stem, similar practices were carried to a greater length. John Ross Mackay, who had been Private Secretary to the Earl of Bute, and afterwards, during seventeen years, was Treasurer of the Ordnance, a man with whom I was personally acquainted, frequently avowed the fact. He lived to a very advanced age, sat in several Parliaments, and only died, I believe, in 1796. A gentleman of high professional rank and of unimpeached veracity told me that, dining at the late Earl of Besborough's in Cavendish Square, in the year 1790, where only four persons were present, including himself, Ross Mackay, who was one of the number, gave them the most ample information upon this subject. Lord Besborough having called, after dinner, for a bottle of excellent champagne, of which wine Mackay was fond, and the conversation accidentally turning on the means of governing the House of Commons, Mackay said that 'Money formed, after all, the only effectual and certain method.' 'The peace of 1763,' continued he, 'was carried through and approved by a pecuniary distribution. Nothing else could have surmounted the difficulty. I was, myself, the channel through which the money passed. With my own hand I secured above one hundred and twenty votes on that vital question to Ministers. Eighty thousand pounds were set apart for the purpose. Forty members of the House of Commons received from me a thousand pounds each. To eighty others I paid five hundred pounds apiece.' Mackay afterwards confirmed more than once this fact to the gentleman above mentioned, who related it to me. He added that Lord Besborough appeared, himself, so sensible of the imprudence, as well as impropriety, of the avowal made by Mackay at his table, that His Lordship sent to him and to the fourth person who had been present on the occasion, next morning, to entreat of them on no account to divulge it during Mackay's life.

Barclay I replied that the ministry, I was sure, would rather give me a place in a cart to Tyburn than any other place whatever; and to both that I sincerely wished to be serviceable; that I needed no other inducement than to be shown how I might be so, but saw they imagined more to be in my power than really was. I was then told again that conferences had been held upon the "HINTS," and the paper

"Wilkes was, however, perfectly well instructed on the subject, and made no secret of his information, even at the time when the Treaty of Fontainebleau was a recent transaction. In his memorable letter addressed from 'Paris, 22d October, 1764,' to the Electors of Aylesbury, he says: 'I will not compliment the present profligate majority in the House of Commons, so far as to say they were so well informed that they knew the exact truth of *every* assertion in the *North Briton*, No. 45. *One* particular, however, came within their knowledge—the means by which it is hinted that the *entire approbation of Parliament*, even of the *Preliminary Articles* of the late inglorious Peace, was obtained, and the previous step to the obtaining that *entire approbation*—the large debt contracted on the *Civil List*. They knew this assertion was extremely true, and I am as ready to own that it was extremely *scandalous*.' It is impossible to convey a charge of such a nature in less equivocal or ambiguous language.

"Relative to the three successive administrations of George Grenville, the Marquis of Rockingham, and the Duke of Grafton, which comprised the period of time between April, 1763, and January, 1770, I can state nothing from my own personal knowledge. Bradshaw conducted that department under the Duke of Grafton. The same system certainly continued during the period of the American war, when Robinson, and under him, Brummell, were its agents. I incline nevertheless to doubt whether, towards the termination of Lord North's ministry, these practices subsisted in all their force; by which I mean to say that I question whether any individual member of the House of Commons was paid for his vote and support in bank notes, as had been done under Walpole, Pelham, and most, if not all their successors down to that time. More refinement had insensibly been introduced into the distribution of gratifications, which were conveyed in oblique shapes, such as lottery tickets, scrip, jobs, contracts, and other beneficial forms, by which the majority was kept together in defiance of a most unfortunate, if not an ill-conducted, war."—EDITOR.

being produced, was read, that I might hear the observations that had been made upon them separately, which were as follows:

1. The first article was approved.

2. The second agreed to, so far as related to the repeal of the Tea Act, but repayment of the duties that had been collected was refused.

3. The third not approved, as it implied a deficiency of power in the Parliament that made those acts.

4. The fourth approved.

5. The fifth agreed to, but with a reserve that no change prejudicial to Britain was to be expected.

6. The sixth agreed to, so far as related to the appropriation of the duties, but the appointment of the officers and their salaries to remain as at present.

7. The seventh, relating to aids in time of peace, agreed to.

8. The eighth, relating to the troops, was inadmissible.

9. The ninth could be agreed to, with this difference, that no proportion should be observed with regard to preceding taxes, but each colony should give at pleasure.

10. The tenth agreed to, as to the restitution of Castle William, but the restriction on the crown in building fortresses refused.

11. The eleventh refused absolutely, except as to the Boston Port Bill, which would be repealed; and the Quebec Act might be so far amended as to reduce that province to its ancient limits. The other Massachusetts acts, being real amendments of their

constitution, must for that reason be continued, as well as to be a standing example of the power of Parliament.

12. The twelfth agreed to, that the judges should be appointed during good behavior, on the Assemblies providing permanent salaries, such as the crown should approve of.

13. The thirteenth agreed to, provided the Assemblies make provision as in the preceding article.

15. The fifteenth agreed to.

16. The sixteenth agreed to, supposing the duties paid to the colony treasuries.

17. The seventeenth inadmissible.

We had not at this time a great deal of conversation upon these points, for I shortened it by observing that, while the Parliament claimed and exercised a power of altering our constitutions at pleasure, there could be no agreement; for we were rendered unsafe in every privilege we had a right to, and were secure in nothing. And, it being hinted how necessary an agreement was for America, since it was so easy for Britain to burn all our seaport towns, I grew warm, said that the chief part of my little property consisted of houses in those towns; that they might make bonfires of them whenever they pleased; that the fear of losing them would never alter my resolution to resist to the last that claim of Parliament, and that it behoved this country to take care what mischief it did us, for that sooner or later it would certainly be obliged to make good all damages with interest. The Doctor smiled, as I thought, with some approbation of my discourse, passionate

as it was, and said he would certainly repeat it to-morrow to Lord Dartmouth.

In the discourse concerning the "HINTS," Mr. Barclay happened to mention that, going to Lord Hyde's, he found Lord Howe with him; and that Lord Hyde had said to him: "You may speak any thing before Lord Howe that you have to say to me, for he is a friend in whom I confide"; upon which he accordingly had spoken with the same freedom as usual. By this I collected how Lord Howe came by the paper of "HINTS," which he had shown me. And, it being mentioned as a measure thought of, to send over a commissioner with powers to inquire into grievances, and give redress on certain conditions, but that it was difficult to find a proper person, I said: "Why not Lord Hyde? He is a man of prudence and temper, a person of dignity, and, I should think, very suitable for such an employment; or, if he would not go, there is the other person you just mentioned, Lord Howe, who would, in my opinion, do excellently well." This passed as mere conversation, and we parted.

Lord Chatham's rejected plan being printed, for the public judgment, I received six copies from Lord Mahon, his son-in-law, which I sent to different persons in America.

A week and more passed in which I heard nothing further of any negotiation, and my time was much taken up among the members of Parliament, when Mr. Barclay sent me a note to say that he was indisposed, but desirous of seeing me, and should be glad if I would call on him. I waited upon him the next

morning, when he told me that he had seen Lord Hyde, and had some further discourse with him on the ARTICLES; that he thought himself now fully possessed of what would do in this business; that he therefore wished another meeting with me and Dr. Fothergill, when he would endeavor to bring prepared a draft conformable chiefly to what had been proposed and conceded on both sides, with some propositions of his own. I readily agreed to the meeting, which was to be on Thursday evening, February 16th.

We met accordingly, when Mr. Barclay produced the following paper. viz.:

"A PLAN WHICH, IT IS BELIEVED, WOULD PRODUCE A PERMANENT UNION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND HER COLONIES

"1. The tea destroyed to be paid for; and, in order that no time may be lost to begin the desirable work of conciliation, it is proposed that the agent or agents, in a petition to the king, should engage that the tea destroyed shall be paid for; and, in consequence of that engagement, a commissioner to have authority, by a clause in an act of Parliament, to open the port (by a suspension of the Boston Port Act) when that engagement shall be complied with.

"2. The Tea-duty Act to be repealed, as well for the advantage of Great Britain as the colonies.

"3. Castle William to be restored to the province of Massachusetts Bay, as formerly, before it was delivered up by Governor Hutchinson.

"4. As it is believed that the *commencement* of conciliatory measures will, in a considerable degree,

quiet the minds of the subjects in America, it is proposed that the inhabitants of the province of Massachusetts Bay should petition the king, and state their objections to the said act.[1] And it is to be *understood* that the said act shall be repealed. *Interim*, the commissioner to have power to suspend the act, in order to enable the inhabitants to petition.

"5. The several provinces who may think themselves aggrieved by the Quebec Bill, to petition in their legislative capacities; and it is to be *understood* that so far of the act, as extends the limits of Quebec beyond its ancient bounds, is to be repealed.

"6. The act of Henry the Eighth to be formally disclaimed by Parliament.

"7. In time of *peace* the Americans to raise, within their respective provinces, by acts of their own legislatures, a certain sum or sums, such as *may be thought* necessary for a peace establishment, to pay governors, judges, etc. Vide *Laws of Jamaica*.

"8. In time of *war*, on requisition made by the king with consent of Parliament, every colony shall raise such sums of money as their legislatures may think suitable to their abilities and the public exigency, to be laid out in raising and paying men for land and sea service, furnishing provisions, transports, or such other purposes as the king shall require and direct.

"9. The acts of navigation to be reëxamined, in order to see whether some alterations might not be made therein as much for the advantage of Great Britain as the ease of the colonies.

[1] Supposed to mean the Boston Port Act.—B. F.

"10. A naval officer to be appointed by the crown to reside in each colony to see those acts observed.

"N. B.—In some colonies they are *not* appointed by the crown.

"11. All duties arising on the acts for regulating trade with the colonies to be for public use of the respective colonies, and paid into their treasuries, and an officer of the crown to see it done.

"12. The admiralty courts to be reduced to the same powers as they have in England.

"13. All judges in the king's colony governments to be appointed during good behavior, and to be paid by the province, agreeable to article seventh.

"N. B.—If the king chooses to add to their salaries, the same to be sent from England.

"14.—The governors to be supported in the same manner."

Our conversation turned chiefly upon the *first* article. It was said that the ministry only wanted some opening to be given them, some ground on which to found the commencement of conciliating measures; that a petition containing such an engagement as mentioned in this article would answer that purpose; that preparations were making to send over more troops and ships; that such a petition might prevent their going, especially if a commissioner were proposed. I was therefore urged to engage the colony agents to join with me in such a petition. My answer was, that no agent had any thing to do with the tea business but those for Massachusetts Bay, who were Mr. Bollan for the Council, myself

for the Assembly, and Mr. Lee, appointed to succeed me when I should leave England; that the latter, therefore, could hardly yet be considered as an agent; and that the former was a cautious, exact man, and not easily persuaded to take steps of such importance without instructions or authority; that, therefore, if such a step were to be taken, it would lie chiefly on me to take it; that, indeed, if there were, as they supposed, a clear probability of good to be done by it, I should make no scruple of hazarding myself in it; but I thought the empowering a commissioner to suspend the Boston Port Act was a method too dilatory, and a mere suspension would not be satisfactory; that if such an engagement were entered into, all the Massachusetts acts should be immediately repealed.

They laid hold of the readiness I had expressed to petition on a probability of doing good, applauded it, and urged me to draw up a petition immediately. I said it was a matter of importance, and with their leave I would take home the paper, consider the propositions as they now stood, and give them my opinion to-morrow evening. This was agreed to, and for that time we parted.

Weighing now the present dangerous situation of affairs in America, and the daily hazard of widening the breach there irreparably, I embraced the idea proposed in the paper of sending over a commissioner, as it might be a means of suspending military operations, and bring on a treaty, whereby mischief would be prevented, and an agreement by degrees be formed and established. I also concluded to do

what had been desired of me as to the engagement, and essayed a draft of a memorial to Lord Dartmouth for that purpose simply, to be signed only by myself. As to the sending of a commissioner, a measure which I was desired likewise to propose, and express my sentiments of its utility, I apprehended my colleagues in the agency might be justly displeased if I took a step of such importance without consulting them, and therefore I sketched a joint petition to that purpose, for them to sign with me if they pleased; but apprehending that would meet with difficulty, I drew up a letter to Lord Dartmouth, containing the same proposition, with the reasons for it, to be sent from me only. I made also upon paper some remarks on the propositions, with some hints on a separate paper, of further remarks to be made in conversation, when we should meet in the evening of the 17th. Copies of these papers (except the first, which I do not find with me on shipboard), are here placed as follows, viz.:

"*To the King's Most Excellent Majesty:*

"The PETITION and MEMORIAL of W. Bollan, B. Franklin, and Arthur Lee,

"Most humbly showeth:

"That your petitioners, being agents for several colonies, and deeply affected with the apprehension of impending calamities that now threaten your Majesty's subjects in America, beg leave to approach your throne, and to suggest with all humility their opinion, formed on much attentive consideration, that, if it should please your Majesty to permit

and authorize a meeting of delegates from the different provinces, and appoint some person or persons of dignity and wisdom from this country to preside in that meeting, or to confer with the said delegates, acquaint themselves fully with the true grievances of the colonies, and settle the means of composing all dissensions, such means to be afterwards ratified by your Majesty if found just and suitable, your petitioners are persuaded, from their thorough knowledge of that country and people, that such a measure might be attended with the most salutary effects, prevent much mischief, and restore the harmony which so long subsisted, and is so necessary to the prosperity and happiness of all your Majesty's subjects in every part of your extensive dominions; which, that Heaven may preserve entire to your Majesty and your descendants, is the sincere prayer of your Majesty's most dutiful subjects and servants."

"*To the Right Honorable Lord Dartmouth.*

"My Lord:—Being deeply apprehensive of the impending calamities that threaten the nation and its colonies through the present unhappy dissensions, I have attentively considered by what possible means those calamities may be prevented. The great importance of a business which concerns us all, will, I hope, in some degree excuse me to your lordship if I presume, unasked, to offer my humble opinion, that should his Majesty think fit to authorize delegates from the several provinces to meet at such convenient time and place as in his wisdom shall seem meet, then and there to confer with a commission or

commissioners to be appointed and empowered by his Majesty, on the means of establishing a firm and lasting union between Britain and the American provinces, such a measure might be effectual for that purpose. I cannot, therefore, but wish it may be adopted, as no one can more ardently and sincerely desire the general prosperity of the British dominions than, my lord, your lordship's most obedient, etc.,

"B. FRANKLIN."

"*Remarks on the Propositions*

"Art. 1. In consequence of that engagement, all the Boston and Massachusetts acts to be suspended, and, in compliance with that engagement, to be totally repealed.

"By this amendment article fourth will become unnecessary.

"Arts. 4 and 5. The numerous petitions heretofore sent home by the colony Assemblies, and either refused to be received, or received and neglected, or answered harshly, and the petitioners rebuked for making them, have, I conceive, totally discouraged that method of application; and if even their friends were now to propose to them the recurring again to petitioning, such friends would be thought to trifle with them. Besides, *all* they desire is now before government in the petition of the Congress, and the whole or parts may be granted or refused at pleasure. The sense of the colonies cannot be better obtained by petition from different colonies than it is by that general petition.

"Art. 7. Read, *such as they may think necessary.*

"Art. 11. As it stands, of little importance. The first proposition was, that they should be repealed as unjust. But they may remain, for they will probably not be executed.

"Even with the amendment proposed above to article first, I cannot think it stands as it should do. If the object be merely the preventing present bloodshed, and the other mischiefs to fall on that country in war, it may possibly answer that end; but, if a thorough, hearty reconciliation is wished for all cause of heart-burning should be removed, and strict justice be done on both sides. Thus the tea should not only be paid for on the side of Boston, but the damage done to Boston by the Port Act should be repaired, because it was done contrary to the custom of all nations, savage as well as civilized, of first demanding satisfaction.

"Art. 14. The judges should receive nothing from the king.

"As to the other two acts, the Massachusetts must suffer all the hazards and mischiefs of war rather than admit the alteration of their charters and laws by Parliament. 'They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.' B. FRANKLIN."

"HINTS

"I doubt the regulating duties will not be accepted, without enacting them, and having the power of appointing the collectors in the colonies.

"If we mean a hearty reconciliation, we must deal candidly, and use no tricks.

"The Assemblies are many of them in a state of dissolution. It will require time to make new elections; then to meet and choose delegates, supposing all could meet. But the Assembly of the Massachusetts Bay cannot act under the new constitution, or meet the new Council for that purpose, without acknowledging the power of Parliament to alter their charter, which they never will do. The language of the proposal is: *Try on my fetters first, and then, if you don't like them, petition and we will consider.*

"Establishing salaries for judges may be a general law. For governors not so, the constitution of colonies differing. It is possible troops may be sent to *particular* provinces, to burden them when they are out of favor.

"Canada. We cannot endure despotism over any of our fellow-subjects. We must all be free, or none."

That afternoon I received the following note from Mrs. Howe, enclosing another from Lord Howe, viz.:

"MRS. HOWE'S compliments to Dr. Franklin; she has just received the enclosed note from Lord Howe, and hopes it will be convenient to him to come to her, either to-morrow or Sunday, at any hour most convenient to him, which she begs he will be so good to name.

"*Grafton Street, Friday, February 17, 1775.*"

[*Enclosed in the foregoing.*]

"*To the Honorable Mrs. Howe:*

"I wish you to procure me an opportunity to see

Dr. Franklin at your house to-morrow, or on Sunday morning, for an essential purpose.

"*Grafton Street, Friday, four o'clock. Received Friday, five o'clock, February 17, 1775.*"

I had not heard from his lordship for some time, and readily answered that I would do myself the honor of waiting upon him at her house to-morrow at eleven o'clock.

Mr. Barclay, Dr. Fothergill, and myself met according to appointment at the Doctor's house. I delivered to them the "Remarks" I had made on the paper, and we talked them over. I read also the sketches I had made of the petitions and memorials; but they being of opinion that the repeal of none of the Massachusetts acts could be obtained by my engaging to pay for the tea, the Boston Port Act excepted, and I insisting on a repeal of *all*, otherwise declining to make the offer, that measure was deferred for the present, and I pocketed my drafts. They concluded, however, to report my sentiments, and see if any further concession could be obtained. They observed, too, that I had signed my "Remarks"; on which I said that, understanding by other means, as well as from them, that the ministers had been acquainted with my being consulted in this business, I saw no occasion for further mystery; and, since conveying and receiving through second hands their sentiments and mine occasioned delay, and might be attended with misapprehension, something being lost or changed by mistake in the conveyance, I did not see why we should not meet and discuss the points together at once; that, if this was

thought proper, I should be willing and ready to attend them to the ministerial persons they conferred with. They seemed to approve the proposal, and said they would mention it.

The next morning I met Lord Howe, according to appointment. He seemed very cheerful, having, as I imagine, heard from Lord Hyde what that lord might have heard from Mr. Barclay the evening of the 16th, viz., that I had consented to petition, and engage payment for the tea; whence it was hoped the ministerial terms of accommodation might take place. He let me know that he was thought of to be sent commissioner for settling the differences in America, adding, with an excess of politeness, that, sensible of his own unacquaintedness with the business, and of my knowledge and abilities, he could not think of undertaking it without me; but, with me, he should do it most readily; for he should found his expectation of success on my assistance. He therefore had desired this meeting, to know my mind upon a proposition of my going with him in some shape or other, as a friend, an assistant, or secretary; that he was very sensible, if he should be so happy as to effect any thing valuable, it must be wholly owing to the advice and assistance I should afford him; that he should therefore make no scruple of giving me upon all occasions the full honor of it; that he had declared to the ministers his opinion of my good dispositions towards peace, and what he now wished was to be authorized by me to say, that I consented to accompany him, and would coöperate with him in the great work of reconciliation; that

the influence I had over the minds of people in America was known to be very extensive; and that I could, if any man could, prevail with them to comply with reasonable propositions.

I replied, that I was obliged to his lordship for the favorable opinion he had of me, and for the honor he did me in proposing to make use of my assistance; that I wished to know what propositions were intended for America; that, if they were reasonable ones in themselves, possibly I might be able to make them appear such to my countrymen; but, if they were otherwise, I doubted whether that could be done by any man, and certainly I should not undertake it. His lordship then said that he should not expect my *assistance* without a *proper consideration.* That the business was of great importance; and, if he undertook it, he should insist on being enabled to make *generous* and *ample* appointments for those he took with him, particularly for me; as well as a firm promise of *subsequent rewards.* "And," said he, "that the ministry may have an opportunity of showing their good disposition towards yourself, will you give me leave, Mr. Franklin, to procure for you previously some mark of it; suppose the payment here of the arrears of your salary, as agent for New England, which I understand they have stopped for some time past?" "My lord," said I, "I shall deem it a great honor to be in any shape joined with your lordship in so good a work; but, if you hope service from any influence I may be supposed to have, drop all thoughts of procuring me any previous favors from ministers; my accepting them would

destroy the very influence you propose to make use of; they would be considered as so many bribes to betray the interest of my country; but only let me see the *propositions*, and, if I approve of them, I shall not hesitate a moment, but will hold myself ready to accompany your lordship at an hour's warning." He then said he wished I would discourse with Lord Hyde upon the business, and asked if I had any objection to meet his lordship. I answered, none, not the least; that I had a great respect for Lord Hyde, and would wait upon him whenever he should be pleased to permit it. He said he would speak to Lord Hyde, and send me word.

On the Monday following, I received a letter from Lord Howe. To understand it better, it is necessary to reflect that in the meantime there was opportunity for Mr. Barclay to communicate to that nobleman the "REMARKS" I had made on the Plan, the sight of which had probably changed the purpose of making any use of me on the occasion. The letter follows:

"GRAFTON STREET, February 20, 1775.

"Not having had a convenient opportunity to talk with Lord Hyde until this morning, on the subject I mentioned when I had, my worthy friend, the pleasure to see you last, I now give you the earliest information of his lordship's sentiments upon my proposition.

"He declares he has no personal objection, and that he is always desirous of the conversation of men of knowledge; consequently, in that respect, would have a pleasure in yours. But he apprehends that

on the present American contest your principles and his, or rather those of Parliament, are as yet so wide from each other, that a meeting merely to discuss them might give you unnecessary trouble. Should you think otherwise, or should any propitious circumstances approximate such distant sentiments, he would be happy to be used as a channel to convey what might tend to harmony from a person of credit to those in power. And I will venture to advance, from my knowledge of his lordship's opinion of men and things, that nothing of that nature would suffer in the passage.

"I am, with sincere regard, your most obedient servant, "HOWE.

"TO DR. FRANKLIN."

As I had no desire of obtruding myself upon Lord Hyde, though a little piqued at his declining to see me, I thought it best to show a decent indifference, which I endeavored in the following answer:

"CRAVEN STREET, February 20, 1775.

"Having nothing to offer on the American business in addition to what Lord Hyde is already acquainted with from the papers that have passed, it seems most respectful not to give his lordship the trouble of a visit; since a mere discussion of the sentiments contained in those papers is not, in his opinion, likely to produce any good effect. I am thankful, however, to his lordship for the permission of waiting on him, which I shall use if any thing occurs that may give a chance of utility in such an interview.

"With sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient humble servant, "B. FRANKLIN.

"To LORD HOWE."

On the morning of the same day, February 20th, it was currently and industriously reported all over the town, that Lord North would that day make a pacific motion in the House of Commons for healing all differences between Britain and America. The House was accordingly very full, and the members full of expectation. The Bedford party, inimical to America, and who had urged severe measures, were alarmed, and began to exclaim against the minister for his timidity, and the fluctuation of his *politics;* they even began to count voices, to see if they could not, by negativing his motion, at once unhorse him, and throw him out of administration. His friends were therefore alarmed for him, and there was much caballing and whispering. At length a motion, as one had been promised, was made, but whether that originally intended, is with me very doubtful. I suspect, from its imperfect composition, from its inadequateness to answer the purpose previously professed, and from some other circumstances, that, when first drawn, it contained more of Mr. Barclay's plan, but was curtailed by advice, just before it was delivered. My old proposition of giving up the regulating duties to the colonies was in part to be found in it; and many, who knew nothing of that transaction, said it was the best part of the motion. It was as follows:

"LORD NORTH'S MOTION, FEBRUARY 20, 1775

"That it is the opinion of this committee, that when the Governor, Council, and Assembly, or the General Court of his Majesty's provinces or colonies shall propose to make provision according to their respective conditions, circumstances, and situations, for contributing their proportion to the common defence, such proportion to be raised under the authority of the General Court or General Assembly of such province or colony, and disposable by Parliament, and shall engage to make provision also for the support of the civil government and the administration of justice in such province or colony, it will be proper, if such proposal shall be approved by his Majesty in Parliament, and for so long as such provision shall be made accordingly, to forbear, in respect of such province or colony, to levy any duties, tax, or assessment, or to impose any further duty, tax, or assessment, except only such duties as it may be expedient to impose for the regulation of commerce; the net produce of the duties last mentioned to be carried to the account of such province, colony, or plantation, exclusively."

After a good deal of wild debate, in which this motion was supported upon various and inconsistent principles by the ministerial people, and even met with an opposition from some of them, which showed a want of concert, probably from the suddenness of the alterations above supposed, they all agreed at length, as usual, in voting it by a large majority.

Hearing nothing during all the following week from Messrs. Barclay and Fothergill, (except that Lord Hyde, when acquainted with my willingness to engage for the payment of the tea, had said it gave him *new life*,) nor any thing from Lord Howe, I mentioned his silence occasionally to his sister, adding, that I supposed it owing to his finding what he proposed to me was not likely to take place; and I wished her to desire him, if that was the case, to let me know it by a line, that I might be at liberty to take other measures. She did so as soon as he returned from the country, where he had been for a day or two; and I received from her the following note:

"MRS. HOWE's compliments to Dr. Franklin; Lord Howe not quite understanding the message received from her, will be very glad to have the pleasure of seeing him, either between twelve and one this morning (the only hour he is at liberty this day), at her house, or at any hour to-morrow most convenient to him.

"*Grafton Street, Tuesday.*"

I met his lordship at the hour appointed. He said that he had not seen me lately, as he expected daily to have something more material to say to me than had yet occurred; and hoped that I would have called on Lord Hyde, as I had intimated I should do when I apprehended it might be useful, which he was sorry to find I had not done. That there was something in my verbal message by Mrs. Howe, which perhaps she had apprehended imperfectly; it was

the hint of my purpose to take other measures. I answered that having, since I had last seen his lordship, heard of the death of my wife at Philadelphia, in whose hands I had left the care of my affairs there, it was become necessary for me to return thither as soon as conveniently might be; that what his lordship had proposed of my accompanying him to America might, if likely to take place, postpone my voyage to suit his conveniency; otherwise, I should proceed by the first ship; that I did suppose by not hearing from him, and by Lord North's motion, all thoughts of that kind were laid aside, which was what I only desired to know from him.

He said my last paper of "Remarks," by Mr. Barclay, wherein I had made the indemnification of Boston, for the injury of stopping its ports, a condition of my engaging to pay for the tea (a condition impossible to be complied with), had discouraged further proceeding on that idea. Having a copy of that paper in my pocket, I showed his lordship that I had proposed no such condition of my engagement, nor any other than the repeal of all the Massachusetts acts. That what followed relating to the indemnification was only expressing my private opinion that it would be just, but by no means insisting upon it. He said the arrangements were not yet determined on; that, as I now explained myself, it appeared I had been much misapprehended; and he wished of all things I would still see Lord Hyde, and asked if I would choose to meet him there (at Mrs. Howe's), or that he should call upon me. I said that I would by no means give Lord Hyde that trouble. That

since he (Lord Howe) seemed to think it might be of use, and wished it done soon, I would wait upon Lord Hyde. I knew him to be an early riser, and would be with him at eight o'clock the next morning; which Lord Howe undertook to acquaint him with. But I added that, from what circumstances I could collect of the disposition of the ministry, I apprehended my visit would answer no material purpose. He was of a different opinion; to which I submitted.

The next morning, March 1st, I accordingly was early with Lord Hyde, who received me with his usual politeness. We talked over a great part of the dispute between the countries. I found him ready with all the newspaper and pamphlet topics: of the expense of settling our colonies, the protection afforded them, the heavy debt under which Britain labored, the equity of our contributing to its alleviation; that many people in England were no more represented than we were, yet all were taxed and governed by Parliament, etc., etc. I answered all, but with little effect; for, though his lordship seemed civilly to hear what I said, I had reason to believe he attended very little to the purport of it, his mind being employed the while in thinking on what he himself purposed to say next.

He had hoped, he said, that Lord North's motion would have been satisfactory; and asked what could be objected to it. I replied the terms of it were that we should grant money till Parliament had agreed we had given enough, without having the least share in judging of the propriety of the measure for which it was to be granted, or of our own abilities to grant;

that these grants were also to be made under a threat of exercising a claimed right of taxing us at pleasure, and compelling such taxes by an armed force, if we did not give till it should be thought we had given enough; that the proposition was similar to no mode of obtaining aids that ever existed, except that of a highwayman, who presents his pistol and hat at a coach window, demanding no specific sum, but, if you will give him all your money, or what he is pleased to think sufficient, he will civilly omit putting his own hand into your pockets; if not, there is his pistol. That the mode of raising contributions in an enemy's country was fairer than this, since there an explicit sum was demanded, and the people who were raising it knew what they were about, and when they should have done; and that, in short, no free people could ever think of beginning to grant upon such terms. That, besides, a new dispute had now been raised by the Parliament's pretending to a power of altering our charters and established laws, which was of still more importance to us than their claim of taxation, as it set us all adrift, and left us without a privilege we could depend upon but at their pleasure; this was a situation we could not possibly be in; and, as Lord North's proposition had no relation to this matter, if the other had been such as we could have agreed to, we should still be far from a reconciliation.

His lordship thought I misunderstood the proposition; on which I took it out and read it. He then waived that point, and said he should be glad to know from me, what would produce a reconciliation. I

said, that his lordship, I imagined, had seen several proposals of mine for that purpose. He said he had; but some of my articles were such as would never be agreed to. That it was apprehended I had several instructions and powers to offer more acceptable terms, but was extremely reserved, and perhaps from a desire he did not blame, of doing better for my constituents; but my expectations might deceive me; and he did think I might be assured I should never obtain better terms than what were now offered by Lord North. That administration had a sincere desire of restoring harmony with America; and it was thought, if I would coöperate with them, the business would be easy. That he hoped I was above retaining resentment against them, for what nobody now approved, and for which satisfaction might be made me; that I was, as he understood, in high esteem among the Americans; that, if I would bring about a reconciliation on terms suitable to the dignity of government, I might be as highly and generally esteemed here, and be honored and *rewarded*, perhaps, *beyond my expectation*.

I replied, that I thought I had given a convincing proof of my sincere desire of promoting peace, when, on being informed that all wanted for the honor of government was, to obtain payment for the tea, I offered, without any instruction to warrant my so doing, or assurance that I should be reimbursed, or my conduct approved, to engage for that payment, if the Massachusetts acts were to be repealed; an engagement in which I must have risked my whole fortune, which I thought few besides me would have

done. That, in truth, private resentments had no weight with me in public business; that I was not the reserved man imagined, having really no secret instructions to act upon. That I was certainly willing to do every thing that could reasonably be expected of me. But, if any supposed I could prevail with my countrymen to take black for white, and wrong for right, it was not knowing either them or me; they were not capable of being so imposed on, nor was I capable of attempting it.

He then asked my opinion of sending over a commissioner, for the purpose mentioned in a preceding part of this account, and my answer was to the same effect. By the way, I apprehend that to give me an opportunity of discoursing with Lord Hyde on that point, was a principal motive with Lord Howe for urging me to make this visit. His lordship did not express his own sentiments upon it. And thus ended this conversation.

Three or four days after I received the following note from Mrs. Howe:

"Mrs. Howe's compliments to Dr. Franklin; Lord Howe begs to have the pleasure of meeting him once more before he goes, at her house; he is at present out of town, but returns on Monday; and any day or hour after that, that the Doctor will name, he will be very glad to attend him.

"*Grafton Street, Saturday, March 4th.*"

I answered that I would do myself the honor of waiting on Lord Howe, at her house, the Tuesday following at eleven o'clock. We met accordingly.

He began by saying that I had been a better prophet than himself, in foreseeing that my interview with Lord Hyde would be of no great use; and then said that he hoped I would excuse the trouble he had given me, as his intentions had been good both towards me and the public. He was sorry that at present there was no appearance of things going into the train he had wished, but that possibly they might yet take a more favorable turn; and as he understood I was going soon to America, if he should chance to be sent thither on that important business, he hoped he might still expect my assistance. I assured him of my readiness at all times of coöperating with him in so good a work; and so, taking my leave, and receiving his good wishes, ended the negotiations with Lord Howe. And I heard no more of that with Messrs. Fothergill and Barclay. I could only gather, from some hints in their conversation, that neither of them were well pleased with the conduct of the ministers respecting these transactions. And a few days before I left London, I met them, by their desire, at the Doctor's house, when they desired me to assure their friends for them, that it was now their fixed opinion that nothing could secure the privileges of America but a firm, sober adherence to the terms of the association made at the Congress, and that the salvation of English liberty depended now on the perseverance and virtue of America.

During the whole, my time was otherwise much taken up by friends calling continually to inquire news from America; members of both Houses of Parliament, to inform me what passed in the Houses,

and discourse with me on the debates, and no motions made or to be made; merchants of London and of the manufacturing and port towns, on their petitions; the Quakers, upon theirs, etc., etc.; so that I had no time to take notes of almost any thing. This account is therefore chiefly from recollection, in which doubtless much must have been omitted, from deficiency of memory; but what there is I believe to be pretty exact; except that discoursing with so many different persons about the same time on the same subject, I may possibly have put down some things as said by or to one person, which passed in conversation with another.

A little before I left London, being at the House of Lords, during a debate in which Lord Camden was to speak, and who indeed spoke admirably on American affairs, I was much disgusted, from the ministerial side, by many base reflections on American courage, religion, understanding, etc., in which we were treated with the utmost contempt, as the lowest of mankind, and almost of a different species from the English of Britain; but particularly the American honesty was abused by some of the Lords, who asserted that we were all knaves, and wanted only by this dispute to avoid paying our debts; that if we had any sense of equity or justice, we should offer payment of the tea, etc. I went home somewhat irritated and heated; and partly to retort upon this nation, on the article of *equity*, drew up a memorial to present to Lord Dartmouth before my departure; but, consulting my friend, Mr. Thomas Walpole, upon it, who is a member of the House

of Commons, he looked at it and at me several times alternately, as if he apprehended me a little out of my senses. As I was in the hurry of packing up, I requested him to take the trouble of showing it to his neighbor, Lord Camden, and ask his advice upon it, which he kindly undertook to do; and returned it to me with a note, which here follows the proposed memorial:

"A MEMORIAL OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, AGENT OF THE PROVINCE OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY

"*To the Right Honorable the Earl of Dartmouth, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State:*

"Whereas an injury done can only give the party injured a right to full reparation; or, in case that be refused, a right to return an equal injury; and whereas the blockade of Boston, now continued nine months, hath every week of its continuance done damage to that town, equal to what was suffered there by the India Company; it follows that such *exceeding* damage is an *injury* done by this government, for which reparation ought to be made; and whereas reparation of injuries ought always (agreeably to the custom of all nations, savage as well as civilized) to be first required, before satisfaction is taken by a return of damage to the aggressors; which was not done by Great Britain in the instance above mentioned; I the underwritten do therefore, as their agent, in the behalf of my country and the said town of Boston, protest against the continuance of the said blockade; and I do hereby solemnly demand satisfaction for the accumulated injury done them,

beyond the value of the India Company's tea destroyed.

"And whereas the conquest of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the coasts of Labrador and Nova Scotia, and the fisheries possessed by the French there and on the Banks of Newfoundland, so far as they were more extended than at present, was made by the *joint forces* of Britain and the colonies, the latter having nearly an equal number of men in that service with the former, it follows that the colonies have an equitable and just right to participate in the advantage of those fisheries; I do, therefore, in the behalf of the colony of the Massachusetts Bay, protest against the act now under consideration in Parliament, for depriving that province, with others, of that fishery (on pretence of their refusing to purchase British commodities), as an act highly unjust and injurious; and I give notice, that satisfaction will probably one day be demanded for all the injury that may be done and suffered in the execution of such act; and that the injustice of the proceeding is likely to give such umbrage to *all the colonies*, that in no future war, wherein other conquests may be meditated, either a man or a shilling will be obtained from any of them to aid such conquests, till full satisfaction be made as aforesaid. B. FRANKLIN.

"*Given in London, this 16th day of March, 1775.*"

"DEAR SIR:—I return you the memorial, which it is thought might be attended with dangerous consequences to your person, and contribute to exasperate the nation.

"I heartily wish you a prosperous voyage, and long health, and am, with the sincerest regard, your most faithful and obedient servant,

"THOMAS WALPOLE.

*"Lincoln's Inn Fields, 16th March, 1775."*

Mr. Walpole called at my house the next day, and, hearing I was gone to the House of Lords, came there to me, and repeated more fully what was in his note; adding, that it was thought my having no instructions directing me to deliver such a protest, would make it appear still more unjustifiable, and be deemed a national affront. I had no desire to make matters worse, and, being grown cooler, took the advice so kindly given me.

The evening before I left London, I received a note from Dr. Fothergill, with some letters to his friends in Philadelphia. In that note he desires me to get those friends "and two or three more together, and inform them that, whatever specious pretences are offered, they are all hollow; and that to get a larger field on which to fatten a herd of worthless parasites is all that is regarded. Perhaps it may be proper to acquaint them with David Barclay's and our united endeavors, and the effects. They will stun at least, if not convince, the most worthy, that nothing very favorable is intended, if more unfavorable articles cannot be obtained." The Doctor, in the course of his daily visits among the great, in the practice of his profession, had full opportunity of being acquainted with their sentiments, the conversation everywhere turning upon the subject of America.

## DXCIX

### TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

PHILADELPHIA, 16 May, 1775.

DEAR FRIEND:—You will have heard, before this reaches you, of a march stolen by the regulars into the country by night, and of their *expedition* back again. They retreated twenty miles in six hours.[1] The governor had called the Assembly to propose Lord North's pacific plan, but, before the time of their meeting, began cutting of throats. You know it was said he carried the sword in one hand and the olive branch in the other; and it seems he chose to give them a taste of the sword first.

He is doubling his fortifications at Boston, and hopes to secure his troops till succor arrives. The place indeed is naturally so defensible that I think them in no danger. All America is exasperated by his conduct, and more firmly united than ever. The breach between the two countries is grown wider, and in danger of becoming irreparable.

I had a passage of six weeks, the weather constantly so moderate that a London wherry might have accompanied us all the way. I got home in the evening, and the next morning was unanimously chosen by the Assembly of Pennsylvania a delegate to the Congress now sitting.

In coming over I made a valuable philosophical discovery, which I shall communicate to you when I can get a little time.[2] At present I am extremely hurried. Yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Alluding to the affair at Lexington and Concord.

[2] Alluding to his experiments with a thermometer in crossing the Gulf Stream.

## DC

### TO MRS. JANE MECOM

PHILADELPHIA, 26 May, 1775.

DEAR SISTER:—I have just now heard, by Mr. Adams, that you are come out of Boston, and are at Warwick, in Rhode Island. I suppose it must be at good Mr. and Mrs. Greene's, to whom present my affectionate respects. I write this line just to let you know that I am returned well from England, and that I found my family well; but have not found the repose I wished for, being the next morning after my arrival delegated to the Congress by our Assembly.

I wish to hear from you, and to know how you have left your affairs in Boston; and whether it would be inconvenient for you to come hither; or you wish rather that I should come to see you, if the business I am engaged in will permit. Let me know if you want any assistance, and what is become of cousin Williams and his family, and other friends. Jonathan was at Paris when I left England, but to return in a week or two. I am ever, my dear sister, your very loving brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCI

### TO MR. STRAHAN [1]

PHILADELPHIA, 5 July, 1775.

MR. STRAHAN:—You are a member of Parliament, and one of that majority which has doomed my

[1] King's printer, London.

country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns, and murder our people. Look upon your hands; they are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am,

Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCII

### TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

PHILADELPHIA, 7 July, 1775.

DEAR FRIEND:—The Congress met at a time when all minds were so exasperated by the perfidy of General Gage, and his attack on the country people, that propositions for attempting an accommodation were not much relished; and it has been with difficulty that we have carried another humble petition to the crown, to give Britain one more chance, one opportunity more, of recovering the friendship of the colonies; which, however, I think she has not sense enough to embrace, and so I conclude she has lost them forever.

She has begun to burn our seaport towns; secure, I suppose, that we shall never be able to return the outrage in kind. She may doubtless destroy them all; but, if she wishes to recover our commerce, are these the probable means? She must certainly be distracted; for no tradesman out of Bedlam ever thought of increasing the number of his customers, by knocking them on the head; or of enabling them

to pay their debts, by burning their houses. If she wishes to have us subjects, and that we should submit to her as our compound sovereign, she is now giving us such miserable specimens of her government, that we shall ever detest and avoid it, as a complication of robbery, murder, famine, fire, and pestilence.

You will have heard, before this reaches you, of the treacherous conduct of General Gage to the remaining people in Boston, in detaining their goods, after stipulating to let them go out with their effects, on pretence that merchants' goods were not effects; the defeat of a great body of his troops by the country people at Lexington; some other small advantages gained in skirmishes with their troops; and the action at Bunker's Hill, in which they were twice repulsed, and the third time gained a dear victory. Enough has happened, one would think, to convince your ministers that the Americans will fight, and that this is a harder nut to crack than they imagined.

We have not yet applied to any foreign power for assistance, nor offered our commerce for their friendship. Perhaps we never may; yet it is natural to think of it if we are pressed. We have now an army on the establishment, which still holds yours besieged. My time was never more fully employed. In the morning at six, I am at the Committee of Safety, appointed by the Assembly to put the province in a state of defence; which committee holds till near nine, when I am at the Congress, and that sits till after four in the afternoon. Both these

bodies proceed with the greatest unanimity, and their meetings are well attended. It will scarce be credited in Britain, that men can be as diligent with us from zeal for the public good, as with you for thousands per annum. Such is the difference between uncorrupted new states, and corrupted old ones.

Great frugality and great industry are now become fashionable here. Gentlemen, who used to entertain with two or three courses, pride themselves now in treating with simple beef and pudding. By these means, and the stoppage of our consumptive trade with Britain, we shall be better able to pay our voluntary taxes for the support of our troops. Our savings in the article of trade amount to near five millions sterling per annum.

I shall communicate your letter to Mr. Winthrop; but the camp is at Cambridge, and he has as little leisure for philosophy as myself. Believe me ever, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCIII

### TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PHILADELPHIA, 8 July, 1775.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I thank you for your kind letter of April 14th. It grieves me that the present situation of public affairs makes it not eligible for you to come hither with your family, because I am sure you would otherwise like this country, and might provide better here for your children, at the same

time that I should be made more happy by your neighborhood and company. I flatter myself, that this may yet happen, and that our public disputes may be ended by the time your private business is settled to your mind, and then we may be all happy together.

The debt you mention of mine to Bolton remains unpaid through his own neglect. I was charged by Matthews ten pounds for the tea-kitchen, but Bolton told me I ought not to pay so much; that he would see what it should be when he got home, and send me word, which he never did. I dunned him for it by letters as often as Matthews sent to me, but received no answer.

I take it kindly of my godson, that he should remember me; my love to him. I am glad to hear the dear children are all well through the measles. I have much delight in my godsons. Mr. and Mrs. Bache join in love to yours. Ben,[1] when I delivered him your blessing, inquired the age of Elizabeth, and thought her yet too young for him; but, as he made no other objection, and that will lessen every day, I have only to wish being alive to dance with your mother at the wedding. Temple was much obliged by your kind remembrance of him. He is now very happy with his father at Amboy, near New York, but returns to me in September, to prosecute his studies in our college.

I am much pleased with the contribution letter, and thank you for your share of it. I am still well and hearty, and never went through more business

[1] Benjamin Franklin Bache, grandson of Dr. Franklin.

than I do at present. God knows when I shall be permitted to enjoy the repose I wish. Adieu, my very dear friend. Continue your pleasing correspondence, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCIV

### TO PETER V. B. LIVINGSTON [1]

PERTH AMBOY, 29 August, 1775.

SIR:—The Committee of Safety acquainted you by a letter, dated the 26th instant, that we had ordered a ton of gunpowder to be sent to you, agreeably to your request. It left Philadelphia early on Sunday morning, and yesterday I overtook the wagon on the road at Trenton, and left it proceeding on the journey. But being informed this morning at Brunswick, that four wagon loads of powder had passed through that place on Friday evening for your city, and supposing it to be the powder which you mentioned as having been expected but not arrived, which occasioned your sending to us, and as we have still too little at Philadelphia, I thought it best to stop that powder, and send it back again, and wrote accordingly to the wagoner by a person just setting out for Trenton. I write this, therefore, that you may not expect it at New York in consequence of our letter. With great respect and esteem, I am, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Chairman of the Committee of Safety in New York. Dr. Franklin was chairman of a similar committee in Philadelphia. When this letter was written, he was on a visit to his son, the governor of New Jersey, who then resided at Perth Amboy.

## DCV

### TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

PHILADELPHIA, 3 October, 1775.

DEAR SIR:—I am to set out to-morrow for the camp, and, having just heard of this opportunity, can only write a line to say that I am well and hearty.[1] Tell our dear good friend, Dr. Price, who sometimes has his doubts and despondencies about our firmness, that America is determined and unanimous; a very few Tories and placemen excepted, who will probably soon export themselves. Britain, at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head; and at Bunker's Hill she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data* his mathematical head will easily calculate the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory. My sincere respects to ———, and to the club of honest Whigs at ———. Adieu. I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] On the 30th of September, Congress appointed Dr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Harrison, as a committee to confer with General Washington, concerning the best mode of supporting and regulating the Continental army. The committee proceeded to the camp at Cambridge, and the conference was held on the 18th of October. See *Washington's Writings*, Vol. III., p. 123.

## DCVI

### TO A FRIEND IN ENGLAND [1]

PHILADELPHIA, 3 October, 1775.

DEAR SIR:—I wish as ardently as you can do for peace, and should rejoice exceedingly in co-operating with you to that end. But every ship from Britain brings some intelligence of new measures that tend more and more to exasperate; and it seems to me that until you have found by dear experience the reducing us by force impracticable, you will think of nothing fair and reasonable.

We have as yet resolved only on defensive measures. If you would recall your forces and stay at home, we should meditate nothing to injure you. A little time so given for cooling on both sides would have excellent effects. But you will goad and provoke us. You despise us too much; and you are insensible of the Italian adage, that there is no *little enemy*. I am persuaded that the body of the British people are our friends; but they are changeable, and by your lying gazettes may soon be made our enemies. Our respect for them will proportionably diminish, and I see clearly we are on the high road to mutual enmity, hatred and detestation. A separation of course will be inevitable. It is a million of pities, so fair a plan as we have hitherto been engaged in for increasing strength and empire with public felicity, should be destroyed by the mangling hands

[1] This letter was first printed in Mr. Vaughan's edition, but without the name of the person to whom it was written. Probably it was to David Hartley.

of a few blundering ministers. It will not be destroyed; God will protect and prosper it; you will only exclude yourselves from any share in it. We hear that more ships and troops are coming out. We know that you may do us a great deal of mischief, and are determined to bear it patiently as long as we can. But if you flatter yourselves with beating us into submission, you know neither the people nor the country. The Congress is still sitting, and will wait the result of their *last* petition.

Yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCVII

### TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS [1]

PHILADELPHIA, 9 December, 1775.

DEAR SIR:—I received your several favors, of May 18th, June 30th, and July 8th, by Messrs. Vaillant and Pochard; whom if I could serve upon your

[1] Charles William Frederick Dumas was a native of Switzerland, but he passed much of his life in Holland. He edited an edition of Vattel. Dr. Franklin met him in Holland, and formed so favorable an opinion of his ability and character, that he recommended him to the *Committee of Secret Correspondence*, as a suitable person to be employed in their service, and was accepted. When Mr. John Adams was minister from the United States in Holland, Mr. Dumas performed the office of secretary and translator; and, after Mr. Adams' departure, he acted for some time in the capacity of *Chargé d'Affaires*, and exchanged with the Dutch Government the ratification of the treaty negotiated by Mr. Adams.

*The Committee of Secret Correspondence* was appointed by Congress on the 29th of November, 1775, for the purpose of corresponding with persons in Europe who were supposed to be friends to the American cause. The above letter was written by Dr. Franklin as a member of that committee. On the 17th of April, 1777, the style of the committee was changed to that of the *Committee of Foreign Affairs*.

recommendation, it would give me great pleasure. Their total want of English is at present an obstruction to their getting any employment among us; but I hope they will soon obtain some knowledge of it. This is a good country for artificers or farmers; but gentlemen of mere science in *les belles lettres* cannot so easily subsist here, there being little demand for their assistance among an industrious people, who, as yet, have not much leisure for studies of that kind.

I am much obliged by the kind present you have made us of your edition of Vattel. It came to us in good season, when the circumstances of a rising state make it necessary frequently to consult the law of nations. Accordingly, that copy, which I kept (after depositing one in our own public library here, and sending the other to the College of Massachusetts Bay, as you directed) has been continually in the hands of the members of our Congress, now sitting, who are much pleased with your notes and preface, and have entertained a high and just esteem for their author. Your manuscript, "*Idée sur le Gouvernement et la Royauté*," is also well relished, and may, in time, have its effect. I thank you, likewise, for the other smaller pieces which accompanied Vattel. "*Le court exposé de ce qui s'est passé entre la Cour britannique et les Colonies*," etc., being a very concise and clear statement of facts, will be reprinted here for the use of our new friends in Canada. The translations of the proceedings of our Congress are very acceptable. I send you herewith what of them has been further published here, together with a few newspapers, containing accounts

of some of the successes Providence has favored us with. We are threatened from England with a very powerful force, to come next year against us. We are making all the provision in our power here to oppose that force, and we hope we shall be able to defend ourselves. But, as the events of war are always uncertain, possibly, after another campaign, we may find it necessary to ask the aid of some foreign power.

It gives us great pleasure to learn from you that *toute l'Europe nous souhaite le plus heureux succès pour la maintien de nos libertés*. But we wish to know whether any one of them, from principles of humanity, is disposed magnanimously to step in for the relief of an oppressed people; or whether if, as it seems likely to happen, we should be obliged to break off all connection with Britain, and declare ourselves an independent people, there is any state or power in Europe who would be willing to enter into an alliance with us for the benefit of our commerce, which amounted before the war to near seven millions sterling per annum, and must continually increase, as our people increase most rapidly. Confiding, my dear friend, in your good-will to us and our cause, and in your sagacity and abilities for business, the committee of Congress, appointed for the purpose of establishing and conducting a correspondence with our friends in Europe, of which committee I have the honor to be a member, have directed me to request of you that, as you are situated at the Hague, where ambassadors from all the courts reside, you would make use of the opportunity

that situation affords you of discovering, if possible, the disposition of the several courts with respect to such assistance or alliance, if we should apply for the one or propose the other. As it may possibly be necessary, in particular instances, that you should, for this purpose, confer directly with some great ministers, and show them this letter as your credential, we only recommend it to your discretion, that you proceed therein with such caution as to keep the same from the knowledge of the English ambassador, and prevent any public appearance, at present, of your being employed in any such business, as thereby, we imagine, many inconveniences may be avoided, and your means of rendering us service increased.

That you may be better able to answer some questions, which will probably be put to you, concerning our present situation, we inform you that the whole continent is very firmly united, the party for the measures of the British ministry being very small and much dispersed; that we have had on foot, the last campaign, an army of near twenty-five thousand men, wherewith we have been able, not only to block up the king's army in Boston, but to spare considerable detachments for the invasion of Canada, where we have met with great success, as the printed papers sent herewith will inform you, and have now reason to expect the whole province may be soon in our possession; that we purpose greatly to increase our force for the ensuing year, and thereby we hope, with the assistance of a well disciplined militia, to be able to defend our coast, notwithstanding its great extent; that we have already a small

squadron of armed vessels to protect our coasting trade, who have had some success in taking several of the enemy's cruisers, and some of their transport vessels and store-ships. This little naval force we are about to augment, and expect it may be more considerable in the next summer.

We have hitherto applied to no foreign power. We are using the utmost industry in endeavoring to make saltpetre, and with daily increasing success. Our artificers are also everywhere busy in fabricating small-arms, casting cannon, etc.; yet both arms and ammunition are much wanted. Any merchants, who would venture to send ships laden with those articles, might make great profit; such is the demand in every colony, and such generous prices are and will be given; of which, and of the manner of conducting such a voyage, the bearer, Mr. Story, can more fully inform you; and whoever brings in those articles is allowed to carry off the value in provisions, to our West Indies, where they will probably fetch a very high price, the general exportation from North America being stopped. This you will see more particularly in a printed resolution of the Congress.

We are in great want of good engineers, and wish you could engage and send us two able ones, in time for the next campaign, one acquainted with field service, sieges, etc., and the other with fortifying of seaports. They will, if well recommended, be made very welcome, and have honorable appointments, besides the expenses of their voyage hither, in which Mr. Story can also advise them. As what we now request of you, besides taking up your time, may put

you to some expense, we send you for the present, enclosed, a bill for one hundred pounds sterling, to defray such expenses, and desire you to be assured that your services will be considered and honorably rewarded by the Congress.

We desire also that you would take the trouble of receiving from Arthur Lee, agent for the Congress in England, such letters as may be sent by him to your care, and of forwarding them to us with your despatches. When you have occasion to write to him to inform him of any thing, which it may be of importance that our friends there should be acquainted with, please to send your letters to him, under cover, directed to Mr. Alderman Lee, merchant, on Tower Hill, London; and do not send it by post, but by some trusty shipper, or other prudent person, who will deliver it with his own hand. And when you send to us, if you have not a direct safe opportunity, we recommend sending by way of St. Eustatia, to the care of Messrs. Robert and Cornelius Stevenson, merchants there, who will forward your despatches to me. With sincere and great esteem and respect, I am, sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCVIII

### TO HIS MOST SERENE HIGHNESS, DON GABRIEL OF BOURBON

PHILADELPHIA, 12 December, 1775.

ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE:—I have just received, through the hands of the ambassador of Spain, the

much esteemed present your Most Serene Highness hath so kindly sent me, of your excellent version of Sallust.[1]

I am extremely sensible of the honor done me, and beg you would accept my thankful acknowledgments. I wish I could send hence any American literary production worthy of your perusal; but as yet the Muses have scarcely visited these remote regions. Perhaps, however, the proceedings of our American Congress, just published, may be a subject of some curiosity at your court. I therefore take the liberty of sending your Highness a copy, with some other papers, which contain accounts of the successes wherewith Providence has lately favored us. Therein your wise politicians may contemplate the first efforts of a rising state, which seems likely soon to act a part of some importance on the stage of human affairs, and furnish materials for a future Sallust. I am very old, and can scarce hope to see the event of this great contest; but, looking forward, I think I see a powerful dominion growing up here, whose interest it will be to form a close and firm alliance with Spain (their territories bordering), and who, being united, will be able, not only to preserve their own people in peace, but to repel the force of all the other powers in Europe. It seems, therefore, prudent on both sides to cultivate a good understanding, that may hereafter be so useful to both; towards

[1] The famous Latin and Spanish edition of Sallust, printed in 1772, by Ibarra, at the Royal Press in Madrid. This edition, which is an imperial quarto, is considered by bibliographers as a masterpiece of typography. Dibden remarks that it "is very rare, as the Prince, Don Gabriel, reserved all the copies for presents."

which a fair foundation is already laid in our minds, by the well founded popular opinion entertained here of Spanish integrity and honor. I hope my presumption in hinting this will be pardoned. If in any thing on this side of the globe I can render either service or pleasure to your Royal Highness, your commands will make me happy. With the utmost esteem and veneration, I have the honor to be your Serene Highness' most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCIX

### ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION AND PERPETUAL UNION, PROPOSED IN GENERAL CONGRESS [1]

#### ARTICLE I

The name of this Confederacy shall henceforth be THE UNITED COLONIES OF NORTH AMERICA.

[1] The following articles exhibit the first sketch of a plan of confederation, which is known to have been presented to Congress. They seem to have been proposed by Dr. Franklin in his individual capacity, and not as a member of any committee. They were brought forward on the 21st of July, 1775. What proceedings were had in relation to them cannot be ascertained from the journals; but it is probable, that, after some debate, they were referred to a committee. It is worthy of remark that, although they are dated nearly a year before the Declaration of Independence, they could hardly be made practical, without assuming the existence of an independent government. The subject of a confederation was discussed from time to time; but the plan finally acceded to by the States was not adopted by Congress till November 15, 1777. This ultimate plan differed in many essential points from Dr. Franklin's draft, and was more extensive. It was not ratified by a sufficient number of States to carry it into effect till July 9, 1778, nor by all the States till March 1, 1781.—EDITOR.

ARTICLE II

The said United Colonies hereby severally enter into a firm league of friendship with each other, binding on themselves and their posterity, for their common defence against their enemies; for the security of their liberties and properties; the safety of their persons and families, and their mutual and general welfare.

ARTICLE III

That each colony shall enjoy and retain as much as it may think fit of its own present laws, customs, rights, privileges, and peculiar jurisdictions within its own limits: and may amend its own constitution, as shall seem best to its own Assembly or Convention.

ARTICLE IV

That, for the more convenient management of general interests, delegates shall be annually elected in each colony, to meet in general Congress at such time and place as shall be agreed on in the next preceding Congress. Only where particular circumstances do not make a deviation necessary, it is understood to be a rule that each succeeding Congress be held in a different colony, till the whole number be gone through; and so in perpetual rotation; and that accordingly the next Congress after the present shall be held at Annapolis, in Maryland.

ARTICLE V

That the power and duty of the Congress shall extend to the determining on war and peace; the

entering into alliances and sending and receiving ambassadors (the reconciliation with Great Britain); the settling all disputes and differences between colony and colony, about limits or any other cause, if such should arise; and the planting of new colonies when proper. The Congress shall also make such general ordinances as, though necessary to the general welfare, particular Assemblies cannot be competent to, viz.: those that may relate to our general commerce or general currency, to the establishment of posts, and the regulation of our common forces. The Congress shall also have the appointment of all general officers, civil and military, appertaining to the general Confederacy, such as general treasurer, secretary, etc.

ARTICLE VI

All charges of wars, and all other general expenses to be incurred for the common welfare, shall be defrayed out of the common treasury, which is to be supplied by each colony in proportion to its number of male polls between sixteen and sixty years of age. The taxes for paying that proportion are to be laid and levied by the laws of each colony.

ARTICLE VII

The number of delegates to be elected and sent to the Congress by each colony shall be regulated, from time to time, by the number of such polls returned; so as that one delegate be allowed for every five thousand polls. And the delegates are to bring with them to every Congress an authenticated return of

the number of polls in their respective provinces, which is to be triennially taken, for the purposes above mentioned.

ARTICLE VIII

At every meeting of the Congress, one half of the members returned, exclusive of proxies, shall be necessary to make a quorum; and each delegate at the Congress shall have a vote in all cases, and, if necessarily absent, shall be allowed to appoint any other delegate from the same colony to be his proxy, who may vote for him.

ARTICLE IX

An Executive Council shall be appointed by the Congress out of their own body, consisting of twelve persons; of whom, in the first appointment, one third, viz. four, shall be for one year, four for two years, and four for three years; and, as the said terms expire, the vacancies shall be filled by appointments for three years, whereby one third of the members will be changed annually. And each person who has served the said term of three years as councillor, shall have a respite of three years before he can be elected again. This Council, of whom two thirds shall be a quorum in the recess of the Congress, is to execute what shall have been enjoined thereby; to manage the general Continental business and interests; to receive applications from foreign countries; to prepare matters for the consideration of the Congress; to fill up, *pro tempore*, Continental offices that fall vacant, and to draw on

the general treasurer for such moneys as may be necessary for general services, and appropriated by the Congress to such services.

ARTICLE X

No colony shall engage in an offensive war with any nation of Indians without the consent of the Congress, or Great Council above mentioned, who are first to consider the justice and necessity of such war.

ARTICLE XI

A perpetual alliance, offensive and defensive, is to be entered into as soon as may be with the Six Nations; their limits to be ascertained and secured to them; their land not to be encroached on, nor any private or colony purchases made of them, hereafter to be held good; nor any contract for lands to be made, but between the great Council of the Indians at Onondaga and the general Congress. The boundaries and lands of all the other Indians shall also be ascertained and secured to them in the same manner, and persons appointed to reside among them in proper districts; who shall take care to prevent injustice in the trade with them; and be enabled at our general expense, by occasional small supplies, to relieve their personal wants and distresses. And all purchases from them shall be by the Congress, for the general advantage and benefit of the United Colonies.

ARTICLE XII

As all new institutions may have imperfections, which only time and experience can discover, it is

agreed that the general Congress, from time to time, shall propose such amendments of this constitution as may be found necessary; which, being approved by a majority of the colony Assemblies, shall be equally binding with the rest of the articles of this Confederation.

ARTICLE XIII

Any and every colony from Great Britain upon the continent of North America, not at present engaged in our association, may, upon application, and joining the said association, be received into this Confederation, viz.: Ireland, the West India Islands, Quebec, St. John's, Nova Scotia, Bermudas, and the East and West Floridas; and shall thereupon be entitled to all the advantages of our union, mutual assistance, and commerce.

These articles shall be proposed to the several provincial Conventions or Assemblies, to be by them considered; and, if approved, they are advised to empower their delegates to agree to and ratify the same in the ensuing Congress. After which the union thereby established is to continue firm, till the terms of reconciliation proposed in the petition of the last Congress to the king are agreed to; till the acts since made, restraining the American commerce and fisheries, are repealed; till reparation is made for the injury done to Boston by shutting up its port, for the burning of Charlestown, and for the expense of this unjust war; and till all the British troops are withdrawn from America. On the arrival of these events, the colonies will return to their former con-

nection and friendship with Britain; but, on failure thereof, this Confederation is to be perpetual.

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*Whereas* [1] It hath pleased God to bless these countries with a most plentiful harvest, whereby much corn and other provisions can be spared to foreign nations who may want the same.

*Resolved*, That [after the expiration of Six Months] from (*and after*)[2] the [20th of July Instant,] (*being one full year after*)[2] [being] the Day appointed by a late Act of the Parliament of Great Britain, for restraining the Trade of the Confederate Colonies, all the Custom-Houses [therein] (if the Act be not first rescinded) shall be shut up, and all the officers of the same discharged from the Execution of their several Functions, and all the Ports of the said Colonies

[1] The free-trade resolutions which follow are not given by Mr. Sparks, but are printed in the Archives of New Jersey, Vol. X., p. 691. They are here printed, however, from the original MS. in Franklin's handwriting, preserved at the State Department in Washington.

I append an explanatory note from Mr. Worthington Ford, of the State Department, to whom I am indebted for the verified copy.

"DEAR SIR:—As I find some differences between the articles as printed in the New Jersey Archives (which you will see are endorsed as being more exact than other printed copies), I have taken the original on the enclosed sheets, giving the parts erased, and also distinguishing the carets or interlinear words thus [ ]. The 'free-trade' resolutions were brought in on the same day as the articles, are written on the same paper, and all in B. F.'s MS. I am quite sure they originally formed a part of the articles (although not numbered and placed in a different volume in the records of the Continental Congress). They were even endorsed 'Articles of Confederation,' though a pen was afterwards run through the endorsement. Very Respectfully,

"WORTHINGTON C. FORD—*Editor.*

"*Oct.* 6, 1887."

[2] The words in italics show the erasures in the original MS.—EDITOR.

are hereby declared to be thenceforth open to the Ships of every State in Europe that will admit our Commerce and protect it; who may [*torn off*] and expose to sale free of all Duties their respective Produce and Manufactures, and every kind of Merchandize, excepting Teas, and the Merchandize of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British West India Islands.

*Resolved*, That we will to the utmost of our Power, maintain and support this Freedom of Commerce for [two] years certain after its Commencement, any reconciliation between us and Britain notwithstanding; and as much longer beyond that Term, as the late Acts of Parliament for restoring the Restraining the Commerce and fisheries, and altering the Laws and Charters of any of the Colonies, shall continue unrepealed.

ENDORSED—No 2. (*Articles of Confederation*)[1] A proposal for opening the ports of N. A. bro[t] in by committee—read July 21, 1775—on motion postponed for future consideration.

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## DCX

### VINDICATION AND OFFER FROM CONGRESS TO PARLIAMENT [2]

Forasmuch as the enemies of America in the Parliament of Great Britain, to render us odious to the

[1] The words in italics show the erasures in the original MS.—EDITOR.

[2] Dr. Franklin was put on a committee to report to Congress a declaration to be published by General Washington, on his arrival in

nation, and give an ill impression of us in the minds of other European powers, have represented us as unjust and ungrateful in the highest degree; asserting, on every occasion, that the colonies were settled at the expense of Britain; that they were, at the expense of the same, protected in their infancy; that they now ungratefully and unjustly refuse to contribute to their own protection, and the common defence of the nation; that they aim at independence; that they intend an abolition of the Navigation Acts; and that they are fraudulent in their commercial dealings, and purpose to cheat their creditors in Britain by avoiding the payment of their just debts;

And as by frequent repetition these groundless assertions and malicious calumnies may, if not contradicted and refuted, obtain further credit, and be injurious throughout Europe to the reputation and interest of the confederate colonies, it seems proper and necessary to examine them in our own just vindication.

With regard to the first, *that the colonies were settled at the expense of Britain*, it is a known fact, that none of the twelve united colonies were settled, or even discovered at the expense of England. Henry the Seventh, indeed, granted a commission to Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian, and his sons, to sail into the western seas for the discovery of new countries; but it was to be "*suis eorum propriis sumptibus et ex-*

camp at Cambridge in the summer of 1775. This paper is doubtless one of the fruits of the discussions in that committee. It is in reply to what Mr. Vaughan calls "a severe act of Parliament which reached the colonies about that time."

*pensis*," at their *own* costs and charges.[1] They discovered, but soon slighted and neglected these northern territories, which were, after more than a hundred years' dereliction, purchased of the natives, and settled at the charge and by the labor of private men and bodies of men, our ancestors, who came over hither for that purpose. But our adversaries have never been able to produce any record that ever the Parliament or government of England was at the smallest expense on these accounts; on the contrary, there exists on the journals of Parliament a solemn declaration in 1642 (only twenty-two years after the first settlement of the Massachusetts, when, if such expense had ever been incurred, some of the members must have known and remembered it), "that these colonies had been planted and established *without any expense to the state.*"[2]

New York is the only colony in the founding of which England can pretend to have been at any expense; and that was only the charge of a small armament to take it from the Dutch, who planted it. But to retain this colony at the peace, another at that time full as valuable, planted by private countrymen of *ours*, was given up by the crown to the Dutch in exchange, viz., Surinam, now a wealthy sugar colony in Guiana, and which, but for that cession, might

[1] See the Commission in the Appendix to Pownall's *Administration of the Colonies*. Edition 1775.

[2] "*Veneris, March* 10, 1642.—Whereas, the plantations in New England have, by the blessing of the Almighty, had good and prosperous success, *without any public charge to this state*, and are now likely to prove very happy for the propagation of the Gospel in those parts, and very beneficial and commodious to this kingdom and nation; the Commons now assembled in Parliament, etc., etc., etc."

still have remained in our possession. Of late, indeed, Britain has been at some expense in planting two colonies, Georgia and Nova Scotia; but those are not in our confederacy [1]; and the expense she has been at in their name has chiefly been in grants of sums unnecessarily large, by way of salaries to officers sent from England, and in jobs to friends, whereby dependants might be provided for; those excessive grants not being requisite to the welfare and good government of the colonies, which good government (as experience in many instances of other colonies has taught us) may be much more frugally, and full as effectually, provided for and supported.

With regard to the second assertion, *that these colonies were protected in their infant state by England*, it is a notorious fact that, in none of the many wars with the Indian natives, sustained by our infant settlements for a century after our first arrival, were ever any troops or forces of any kind sent from England to assist us; nor were any forts built at her expense, to secure our seaports from foreign invaders; nor any ships of war sent to protect our trade till many years after our first settlement, when our commerce became an object of revenue, or of advantage to British merchants; and then it was thought necessary to have a frigate in some of our ports, during peace, to give weight to the authority of custom-house officers, who were to restrain that commerce

[1] Georgia joined the other colonies soon afterwards. On the 20th of July, 1775, a letter was read in Congress from the convention of Georgia, giving notice that delegates had been appointed in that colony to attend the Continental Congress.—EDITOR.

for the benefit of England. Our own arms, with our poverty, and the care of a kind Providence, were all this time our only protection; while we were neglected by the English government; which either thought us not worth its care, or having no goodwill to some of us, on account of our different sentiments in religion and politics, was indifferent what became of us.

On the other hand, the colonies have not been wanting to do what they could in every war for annoying the enemies of Britain. They formerly assisted her in the conquest of Nova Scotia. In the war before last, they took Louisburg, and put it into her hands. She made her peace with that strong fortress restoring it to France, greatly to their detriment. In the last war, it is true, Britain sent a fleet and army, which acted with an equal army of ours, in the reduction of Canada; and perhaps thereby did more for us than we in the preceding wars had done for her. Let it be remembered, however, that she rejected the plan we formed in the Congress at Albany, in 1754, for our own defence, by a union of the colonies; a union she was jealous of, and therefore chose to send her own forces; otherwise her aid to protect us was not wanted. And from our first settlement to that time, her military operations in our favor were small, compared with the advantages she drew from her exclusive commerce with us. We are, however, willing to give full weight to this obligation; and as we are daily growing stronger, and our assistance to her becomes of more importance, we should with pleasure

embrace the first opportunity of showing our gratitude by returning the favor in kind.

But, when Britain values herself as affording us protection, we desire it may be considered, that we have followed her in all her wars, and joined with her at our own expense against all she thought fit to quarrel with. This she has required of us; and would never permit us to keep peace with any power she declared her enemy; though by separate treaties we might well have done it. Under such circumstances, when at her instance we made nations our enemies, whom we might otherwise have retained our friends, we submit it to the common-sense of mankind, whether her protection of us in these wars was not our *just due*, and to be claimed of *right*, instead of being received as a *favor?* And whether, when all parts of an empire exert themselves to the utmost in their common defence, and in annoying the common enemy, it is not as well the *parts* that protect the *whole*, as the *whole* that protects the *parts?* The protection then has been proportionably mutual. And whenever the time shall come, that our abilities may as far exceed hers, as hers have exceeded ours, we hope we shall be reasonable enough to rest satisfied with her proportionable exertions, and not think we do too much for a part of the empire, when that part does as much as it can for the whole.

The charge against us, *that we refuse to contribute to our own protection*, appears from the above to be groundless; but we further declare it to be absolutely false; for it is well known that we ever held it as our duty to grant aids to the crown, upon requisition,

towards carrying on its wars; which duty we have cheerfully complied with to the utmost of our abilities; insomuch that frequent and grateful acknowledgments thereof, by king and Parliament, appear on the records.[1] But as Britain has enjoyed a most gainful monopoly of our commerce, the same, with our maintaining the dignity of the king's representative in each colony, and all our own separate establishments of government, civil and military, has ever hitherto been deemed an equivalent for such aids as might otherwise be expected from us in time of peace. And we hereby declare that on a reconciliation with Britain we shall not only continue to grant aids in time of war as aforesaid, but whenever she shall think fit to abolish her monopoly, and give us the same privileges of trade as Scotland received at the union, and allow us a free commerce with all the rest of the world, we shall willingly agree (and we doubt not it will be ratified by our constituents) to *give and pay* into the sinking fund [one hundred thousand pounds] sterling per annum for the term of one hundred years; which duly, faithfully, and inviolably applied for that purpose, is demonstrably more than sufficient to extinguish *all her present national* debt; since it will in that time amount, at legal British interest, to more than [two hundred and thirty millions of pounds.[2]]

[1] Supposed to allude to certain passages in the journals of the House of Commons on the 4th of April, 1748; 28th of January, 1756; 3d of February, 1756; 16 and 19 of May, 1757; 1st of June, 1758; 26th and 30th of April, 1759; 26th and 31st of March, and 28th of April, 1760; 9th and 20th of January, 1761; 22d and 26th of January, 1762; and 14th and 17th of March, 1763.—B. V.

[2] See Dr. Price's *Appeal on the National Debt.*—B. V.

But if Britain does not think fit to accept this proposition, we, in order to remove her groundless jealousies, *that we aim at independence, and an abolition of the Navigation Act* (which hath in truth never been our intention), and to avoid all future disputes about the right of making that and other acts for regulating our commerce, do hereby declare ourselves ready and willing to enter into a *covenant with Britain*, that she shall fully possess, enjoy, and exercise that right for a hundred years to come, the same being *bona fide* used for the common benefit; and, in case of such agreement, that every Assembly be advised by us to confirm it solemnly by laws of their own, which, once made, cannot be repealed without the assent of the crown.

The last charge, *that we are dishonest traders, and aim at defrauding our creditors in Britain*, is sufficiently and authentically refuted by the solemn declarations of the British merchants to Parliament (both at the time of the Stamp Act and in the last session), who bore ample testimony to the general good faith and fair dealing of the Americans, and declared their confidence in our integrity, for which we refer to their petitions on the journals of the House of Commons. And we presume we may safely call on the body of the British tradesmen, who have had experience of both, to say whether they have not received much more punctual payment from us, than they generally have from the members of their own two Houses of Parliament.

On the whole of the above it appears that the charge of *ingratitude* towards the mother country,

brought with so much confidence against the colonies, is totally without foundation; and that there is much more reason for retorting that charge on Britain, who, not only never contributes any aid, nor affords, by an exclusive commerce, any advantages to Saxony, *her* mother country, but, no longer since than in the last war, without the least provocation, subsidized the king of Prussia while he ravaged that *mother country* and carried fire and sword into its capital, the fine city of Dresden[1] An example we hope no provocation will induce us to imitate.

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## DCXI

### THE BRITISH NATION, AS IT APPEARED TO THE COLONISTS IN 1775 [1]

"*Whereas*, The British nation, through great corruption of manners and extreme dissipation and profusion, both private and public, have found all honest resources insufficient to supply their excessive luxury and prodigality, and thereby have been driven to the practice of every injustice which avarice could dictate or rapacity execute; And whereas, not satisfied with the immense plunder of the East, obtained by sacrificing millions of the human species, they have lately turned their eyes to the West, and grudging us the peaceable enjoyment of the fruits of our hard labor and virtuous industry, have for years past been endeavoring to

[1] The draft resolution was found among Dr. Franklin's papers. If prepared with the intent to have it adopted by Congress, which is improbable, the author changed his mind, for it was never offered.

extort the same from us under color of laws regulating trade, and have thereby actually succeeded in draining us of large sums to our great loss and detriment; And whereas, impatient to seize the whole, they have at length proceeded to open robbery, declaring, by a solemn act of Parliament, that all our estates are theirs, and all our property found upon the sea divisible among such of their armed plunderers as shall take the same; and have even dared in the same act, to declare that all the spoilings, thefts, burnings of houses and towns, and murders of innocent people, perpetrated by their wicked and inhuman corsairs on our coasts, previous to any war declared against us, were just actions, and shall be so deemed, contrary to several commandments of God (which by this act they presume to repeal), and to all the principles of right and all the ideas of justice entertained heretofore by every other nation, savage as well as civilized; thereby manifesting themselves to be *hostes humani generis;* And whereas, as it is not possible for the people of America to subsist under such continual ravages without making some reprisals; Therefore, *Resolved*, etc."

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## DCXII

### TO CHARLES LEE [1]

PHILADELPHIA, 11 February, 1776.

DEAR SIR:—The bearer, M. Arundel, is directed by the Congress to repair to General Schuyler, in

[1] General Charles Lee was at this time in the command of New York, and was engaged in constructing works of defence.

order to be employed by him in the artillery service. He proposes to wait on you upon his way, and has requested me to introduce him by a line to you. He has been an officer in the French service, as you will see by his commissions; and, professing a good will to our cause, I hope he may be useful in instructing our gunners and matrosses. Perhaps he may advise in opening the nailed cannon. I received the enclosed the other day, from an officer, Mr. Newland, who served in the two last wars, and was known by General Gates, who spoke well of him to me when I was at Cambridge. He is desirous now of entering into your service. I have advised him to wait upon you at New York.

They still talk big in England and threaten hard; but their language is somewhat civiler, at least not quite so disrespectful to us. By degrees they come to their senses, but too late, I fancy, for their interest.

We have got a large quantity of saltpetre, one hundred and twenty tons, and thirty more expected. Powder-mills are now wanting. I believe we must set to work to make it by hand. But I still wish, with you, that pikes could be introduced, and I would add bows and arrows. These were good weapons, not wisely laid aside:

1st. Because a man may shoot as truly with a bow as with a common musket.

2dly. He can discharge four arrows in the time of charging and discharging one bullet.

3dly. His object is not taken from his view by the smoke of his own side.

4thly. A flight of arrows seen coming upon them,

terrifies and disturbs the enemies' attention to their business.

5thly. An arrow sticking in any part of a man puts him *hors du combat* till it is extracted.

6thly. Bows and arrows are more easily provided everywhere than muskets and ammunition.

Polydore Virgil, speaking of one of our battles against the French in Edward the Third's reign, mentions the great confusion the enemy was thrown into, *sagittarum nube*, from the English; and concludes: *Est res profecto dictu mirabilis, ut tantus ac potens exercitus a solis fere Anglicis sagittariis victus fuerit; adeo Anglus est sagittipotens, et id genus armorum valet.* If so much execution was done by arrows when men wore some defensive armor, how much more might be done now that it is out of use.

I am glad you are come to New York, but I also wish you could be in Canada. There is a kind of suspense in men's minds here at present, waiting to see what terms will be offered from England. I expect none that we can accept; and when that is generally seen, we shall be more unanimous and more decisive. Then your proposed solemn league and covenant will go better down, and perhaps most of your other strong measures will be adopted. I am always glad to hear from you, but I do not deserve your favors, being so bad a correspondent. My eyes will now hardly serve me to write by night, and these short days have been all taken up by such a variety of business, that I seldom can sit down ten minutes without interruption. God give you success. I am with the greatest esteem, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

## DCXIII

### TO CHARLES LEE

PHILADELPHIA, 19 February 1776.

DEAR SIR:—I rejoice that you are going to Canada. I hope the gout will not have the courage to follow you into that severe climate. I believe you will have the number of men you wish for. I am told there will be two thousand more, but there are always deficiencies.[1]

The bearer, Mr. Paine, has requested a line of introduction to you, which I give the more willingly, as I know his sentiments are not very different from yours. He is the reputed, and, I think, the real author of "Common Sense," a pamphlet that has made great impression here. I do not enlarge, both because he waits, and because I hope for the pleasure of conferring with you face to face in Canada. I will only add that we are assured here, on the part of France, that the troops sent to the West Indies have no inimical views to us or our cause. It is thought they intend a war without a previous declaration. God prosper all your undertakings, and return you with health, honor, and happiness.

Yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Congress had ordered General Lee to Canada, but he was sent to the south.

## DCXIV

### FROM DAVID HARTLEY [1]

LONDON, 24 February, 1776.

DEAR SIR:—It is so long since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, that I fear the administration has but too effectually stopped the channel of communication between this country and its colonies. I have always dreaded this event, as fatal and final to the prospect of a national reconciliation. When, in any contention, the parties are not only studiously kept asunder, but mischief-making go-betweens exert every art, and practise every fraud, to inflame jealousies, animosities, and resentments between them, it is but too obvious to fear, that your own prophetic words should be accomplished; that, instead of that cordial affection, which once and so long existed, and that harmony so suitable to the happiness, safety, strength, and welfare of both countries, a mutual hatred, such as we see subsisting between the Spaniards and Portuguese, the Genoese and Corsicans, should fatally take root between the parent state and its colonies.

These fears are not abated by the consideration of the incessant injuries, which have been, and which continue to be, heaped upon our unhappy fellow-subjects in America. These injuries are, indeed, brought upon them by the administration, who

[1] The original of this letter is in the handwriting of David Hartley, but signed "G. B.," a signature which Mr. Hartley affixed to many of his letters to Dr. Franklin, written during the revolution. Mr. Hartley was a member of Parliament, and opposed to the ministerial measures in regard to America.—SPARKS.

usurp the authority, which they pretend to derive from the people; but, from the distance between us and our American brethren, and the false evidence transmitted from one to the other, I greatly fear that national resentments will become indiscriminate. It is inseparable from human nature, that the mind, under any grievous suffering, especially injury, will be distracted and broken from its nearest connections, which may happen to be but accidentally involved. The affection of states to each other consists of the combination of personal affections, parentage, and intercourse. When blood is shed, and the parent weeps for his son, the widow for her husband, brother for brother, an inextinguishable resentment arises. Those unfortunates who have lost their relatives and friends, become furious; and in those who have them yet to lose, horrors and fears take place of and drive out affection; the bonds of attachment are let loose, and all the tumultuous passions are set afloat.

I know that you are as sensible of these consequences as any one can be. You have foreseen them afar off. You have predicted them; you have done every thing in your power to soften animosities, and to put off the evil day. I hope still, that you will not despair. Your age, experience, character, humanity, and example of moderation in disregarding those injuries and insults which have been offered to yourself, give you the best title to plead with your countrymen to suspend their resentments, to discriminate those who have not injured them, and to remember the ties of affection

between themselves and their fellow-subjects in England. I see the influence of your counsels in the Congress. I see the distinction clearly made between the ministry and the people of England; but I fear that, at the same time, the seeds of jealousy are struggling to break out.

The address from the Congress to the Assembly of Jamaica speaks of the people of England as dissipated and corrupt. The people of England are far otherwise. They are just and generous; and, if it were put to the sense of the people of England, you would not be left in any doubt whether it was *want of will*, or *want of power*, to do you justice. You know the blot of our constitution, by which, to our disgrace, and to your misfortune, a corrupt ministry, sheltered by Parliamentary influence, are out of our immediate control. A day of account may come, when the justice of the nation may prevail; and if it comes not too late, it may prove a day of reconciliation and cordial reunion between us and America. The trial is with you, to suspend your resentments from becoming indiscriminate; and a great trial it is. I cannot tell you what efforts the ministry have in their purpose to try. I am amazed at their headstrong hardiness to proceed in an undertaking, which gives them so little prospect of success.

Many of your best friends in England regret that the Congress has not made some specific and definite proposition upon which the sense of the people of England might have been consulted. A people at large cannot enter into historical details, especially when facts are so studiously confounded and mis-

represented, but still they could judge of a simple proposition. If any such had been made, I think it would have been the most likely method to captivate the good-will of the nation. While the propositions of the Congress are general and indefinite, the ministry treat them as general words, meaning little or nothing in fact. But, I think, the further prosecution of hostile measures could not be supported by the ministry, if they were to refuse any definite and equitable offer of accommodation, made on the part of America. If it be possible, let the two countries be once more reunited in affection. It is not simply peace that we ought to strive for, but reconciliation, which is more than peace. We may have peace with foreign states, but it must be reconciliation alone that can reunite us as one people. However forlorn the prospect may be, let not the common friends slacken their endeavors. Constancy is our only hope. All is lost if we despair. I am, dear sir, with the greatest regard and esteem, affectionately yours, G. B.

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## DCXV

### TO PHILIP SCHUYLER [1]

PHILADELPHIA, 11 March, 1776.

SIR:—The Congress have appointed three commissioners to go to Canada, of which number I have

[1] General Schuyler had at this time the command of the northern department, and of the army operating in Canada.

the honor to be one.[1] We purpose setting out some day this week. I take the liberty of mentioning this, as possibly a little previous notice may enable

[1] On the 27th of March, 1776, Congress appointed Dr. Franklin, Samuel Chase, and Charles Carroll, as Commissioners for the Colonies to "promote or form a union between the said Colonies and the people of Canada." John Carroll, a Jesuit priest, afterwards the first Romanist archbishop in America, was invited by Congress to accompany them, for the sake of his influence over a population composed of less than one Protestant to one thousand Romanists.

An American army was then in Canada.

Among the papers preserved in the first volume of the Transactions of the Maryland Historical Society, is a diary kept by Charles Carroll during this expedition. His account of the voyage of the commissioners from New York as far up the river as Po'keepsie, furnishes a curious and impressive standard by which to estimate the changes wrought in the speed and comfort of travel on the Hudson during the succeeding hundred years. A journey which occupied these gentlemen four days, would now occupy less than as many hours. The commissioners reached Montreal on the 29th, consuming on their journey from New York 27 days.

*Journal of Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, during his Visit to Canada, in 1776, as one of the Commissioners from Congress.*

APRIL 2d, 1776.—Left New York at 5 o'clock, p. m. Sailed up North River, or Hudson, that afternoon about thirteen miles. About 1 o'clock in the night were awakened by the firing of cannon; heard three great guns distinctly from the *Asia:* soon saw a great fire, which we presumed to be a house on Bedloe's Island, set on fire by a detachment of our troops. Intelligence had been received that the enemy were throwing up intrenchments on that island, and it had been determined by our generals to drive them off. Dr. Franklin went upon deck, and saw wavering flashes of light appearing suddenly and disappearing, which he conjectured to be the fire of musquetry, although he could not hear the report.

3d.—A bad rainy day; wind northeast; a. m. 11 o'clock, opposite to Col. Phillipp's (a tory); pretty situation near the river; a garden sloping down to it; house has a pretty appearance; a church at little distance on the south side, surrounded by cedar trees. The banks of the river on the western side exceedingly steep and rocky; pine trees growing amidst the rocks. On the eastern or New York side the banks are not near so steep; they decline pretty gradually to the water's edge. The river is straight hitherto. About five o'clock the wind breezed up from the south; got under way and ran with a pretty

you more easily to make any preparation you shall judge necessary to facilitate and expedite our journey, which I am sure you will be kindly disposed to

easy gale as far as the Highlands, forty miles from New York. The river here is greatly contracted, and the lands on each side very lofty. When we got into this strait the wind increased, and blew in violent flaws; in doubling one of these steep craggy points we were in danger of running on the rocks; endeavored to double the cape called St. Anthony's Nose, but all our efforts proved ineffectual; obliged to return some way back in the straits to seek shelter; in doing this our mainsail was split to pieces by a sudden and most violent blast of wind off the mountains. Came to anchor; blew a perfect storm all night and all day the fourth. Remained all day (the fourth) in Thunder Hill bay, about a mile below St. Anthony's Nose, and a quarter of a mile from Thunder Hill. Our crew were employed all this day in repairing the mainsail. The country round about the bay has a wild and romantic appearance. The hills are almost perpendicularly steep, and covered with rocks and trees of a small size. The hill called St. Anthony's Nose is said to be full of sulphur. I make no doubt this place has experienced some violent convulsion from subterraneous fire; the steepness of the hills, their correspondence, the narrowness of the river, and its depth, all confirm me in this opinion.

5th.—Wind at northeast, mainsail not yet repaired. Sailed about 12 o'clock from Thunder Hill bay; just before we doubled Cape Anthony's Nose, Mr. Chase and I landed to examine a beautiful fall of water. Mr. Chase, very apprehensive of the leg of mutton being boiled too much, impatient to get on board; wind breezing up, we had near a mile to row to overtake the vessel. As soon as we doubled Cape St. Anthony's Nose a beautiful prospect opened on us. The river from this place to Constitution Fort, built on Martler's Rock, forms a fine canal, surrounded with high hills of various shapes; one in particular resembles a sugar loaf, and is so called. About three miles from Cape St. Anthony's Nose is another beautiful cascade called "the Buttermilk." This is formed by a rivulet which flows from a lake on the top of a neighboring mountain; this lake, we were told, abounds with trout and perch. Arrived about five o'clock at Constitution Fort. Mr. Chase went with me on shore to visit the fort; it is built on a rock called Martler's Rock; the river at this place makes a sudden bend to the west; the battery (for it does not deserve the name of a fort, being quite open on the northeast side) has two flanks, one fronting the south, and the other the west. On the south flank were planted thirteen six- and one nine-pounder; on the west

do for us. A friend with us will make our company four, besides our servants. We shall either go in carriages directly to Albany, or by water if the river is open from New York. Hoping soon for the pleasure of seeing you, I now only add that I am, with the sincerest respect and esteem, sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

flank seven nine-pounders and one six-pounder; but there were no cannoniers in the fort, and only one hundred and two men fit to do duty; they intend to erect another battery on an eminence called Gravel Hill, which will command vessels coming up the river as soon as they double Cape St. Anthony's Nose. A little above this cape a battery is projected to annoy the enemy's vessels, to be called Fort Montgomery; they intend another battery lower down the river and a little below Cape St. Anthony's Nose. In the Highlands are many convenient spots to construct batteries on, but in order to make them answer the intended purpose, weighty metal should be placed on these batteries and skilful gunners should be engaged to serve the artillery. About 9 o'clock at night, the tide making, we weighed anchor, and came to again about 6 o'clock in the morning, the 6th instant. The river is remarkably deep all the way through the Highlands, and the tide rapid. When we came to an anchor off Constitution Fort we found the depth of water about thirty fathoms. These Highlands present a number of romantic views, the steep hills overshadow the water, and in some places the rocks, should they be rolled down, would fall into the river, several feet from the banks on which they stood. This river seems by nature intended to open a communication between Canada and the Province of New York by water, and, by some great convulsion, a passage has been opened by the waters of the Hudson River through the Highlands. These are certainly a spur of the endless mountains.

6th.—Weighed anchor about seven o'clock in the morning; had a fine breeze; the country more cultivated above the Highlands; passed several mills, all of them overshot; saw two frigates on the stocks at Pokeepsay, building for the service of the United Colonies: saw a great many lime kilns in our run this morning on both sides of the river, the banks of which begin to slope more gradually to the water's edge. We wrote to General Heath from off Constitution Fort, and sent the letter to the commanding officer of the fort, with orders to forward it by express immediately to the General at New York. The purport of the letter was to inform the General of the very defenceless condition of the fort, that measures might be immediately taken to put it in a better posture of defence.

P. S.—The bearer, M. La Jeunesse, has been considered by the Congress as a friend to the American cause, and he is recommended to your protection on his return to Canada.

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## DCXVI

### TO LORD STIRLING [1]

BRUNSWICK, 27 March, 1776.

MY DEAR LORD:—I received your obliging letter some days since at Philadelphia; but our departure from thence being so uncertain, I could not till now acquaint your lordship when we expected to be at New York. We move but slowly, and I think we shall scarce reach Newark before to-morrow, so that we cannot have the pleasure of seeing you before Friday. Being myself, from long absence, as much a stranger in New York as the other gentlemen, we join in requesting you would be so good as to cause lodgings to be provided for us, and a sloop engaged to carry us to Albany. There are five of us, and we propose staying in New York two nights at least. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Brigadier-general in the American army, and stationed at New York, where, for a short time, he had the chief command, after the departure of General Lee.

## DCXVII

### TO JOSIAH QUINCY

SARATOGA, 15 April, 1776.

DEAR SIR:—I am here on my way to Canada, detained by the state of the lakes, in which the unthawed ice obstructs navigation. I begin to apprehend that I have undertaken a fatigue that at my time of life may prove too much for me; so I sit down to write to a few friends by way of farewell.

I congratulate you on the departure of your late troublesome neighbors. I hope your country will now for some time have rest, and that care will be taken so to fortify Boston, as that no force shall be able again to get footing there. Your very kind letter of November 13th, inclosing Lord Chatham's and Lord Camden's speeches, I duly received. I think no one can be more sensible than I am of the favors of corresponding friends, but I find it impossible to answer as I ought. At present I think you will deem me inexcusable, and therefore I will not attempt an apology. But if you should ever happen to be at the same time oppressed with years and business, you may then extenuate a little for your old friend.

The notes of the speeches taken by your son, whose loss I shall ever deplore with you, are exceedingly valuable, as being by much the best account preserved of that day's debate.[1]

You ask: "When is the Continental Congress by

[1] Notes of speeches made by Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, and others, in the British House of Lords, January 20, 1775. See *Life of Josiah Quincy, Junior*, pp. 318, 335.

*general consent* to be formed into a supreme legislature; alliances, defensive and offensive, formed; our ports opened, and a formidable naval force established at the public charge?" I can only answer, at present, that nothing seems wanting but that "general consent." The novelty of the thing deters some; the doubt of success, others; the vain hope of reconciliation, many. But our enemies take continually every proper measure to remove these obstacles, and their endeavors are attended with success, since every day furnishes us with new causes of increasing enmity, and new reasons for wishing an eternal separation, so that there is a rapid increase of the formerly small party, who were for an independent government.

Your epigram on Lord Chatham's remark has amply repaid me for the song. Accept my thanks for it, and for the charming extract of a lady's letter, contained in your favor of January 22d. I thought, when I sat down, to have written by this opportunity to Dr. Cooper, Mr. Bowdoin, and Dr. Winthrop, but I am interrupted. Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to them, and to your family. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXVIII

### TO PHILIP SCHUYLER

NEW YORK, 27 May, 1776.

DEAR GENERAL:—We arrived here safe yesterday evening in your post-chaise, driven by Lewis. I was

unwilling to give so much trouble, and would have borrowed your sulky, and driven myself; but good Mrs. Schuyler insisted on a full compliance with your pleasure, as signified in your letter, and I was obliged to submit, which I was afterwards very glad of, part of the road being very stony and much gullied, where I should probably have overset and broken my own bones, all the skill and dexterity of Lewis being no more than sufficient. Through the influence of your kind recommendation to the innkeepers on the road, we found a great readiness to supply us with a change of horses. Accept our thankful acknowledgments; they are all we can at present make.

We congratulate you on the very valuable prize made at Boston. They threaten us with a mighty force from England and Germany. I trust that before the end of the campaign its inefficacy will be apparent to all the world, our enemies become sick of their projects, and the freedom of America be established on the surest foundation—its own ability to defend it. May God bless, and preserve you, for all our own sakes as well as for that of your dear family! Mr. Carroll joins me in every hearty wish for prosperity and felicity to you and yours. With the highest esteem and respect I am, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCXIX

### TO THE COMMISSIONERS IN CANADA [1]

NEW YORK, 27 May, 1776.

DEAR FRIENDS:—We arrived here safe yesterday evening, having left Mrs. Walker with her husband at Albany, from whence we came down by land. We passed him on Lake Champlain; but he returning overtook us at Saratoga, where they both took such liberties, in taunting at our conduct in Canada, that it came almost to a quarrel. We continued our care of her, however, and landed her safe in Albany with her three wagon loads of baggage, brought thither without putting her to any expense, and parted civilly, though coldly. I think they both have an excellent talent at making themselves enemies, and I believe, live where they will, they will never be long without them.

We met yesterday two officers from Philadelphia, with a letter from the Congress to the Commissioners, and a sum of hard money. I opened the letter, and sealed it again, directing them to carry it forward to you. I congratulate you on the great prize carried into Boston. Seventy-five tons of gunpowder are an excellent supply, and the thousand carbines with bayonets, another fine article. The German auxiliaries are certainly coming. It is our business to prevent their returning. The Congress have advised the erecting new governments, which has

[1] The condition of Dr. Franklin's health compelled him to leave Canada before the other Commissioners returned, with the Reverend Mr. Carroll.

occasioned some dissension in Philadelphia, but I hope it will soon be composed.[1]

I shall be glad to hear of your welfare. As to myself, I find I grow daily more feeble, and think I could hardly have got along so far, but for Mr. Carroll's friendly assistance and tender care of me. Some symptoms of the gout now appear, which make me think my indisposition has been a smothered fit of that disorder, which my constitution wanted strength to form completely. I have had several fits of it formerly.

God bless you and prosper your counsels, and bring you safe again to your friends and families. With the greatest esteem and respect, I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXX

### TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

PHILADELPHIA, 22 July, 1776.

SIR:—The bearer, Mr. Joseph Belton, some time since petitioned the Congress for encouragement to destroy the enemy's ships of war by some contrivance of his invention. They came to no conclusion on his petition; and, as they appear to have no great opinion of such proposals, it is not easy, in the mul-

[1] It was resolved in Congress, "That it be recommended to the respective Assemblies and Conventions of the United Colonies, where no government sufficient for the exigencies of their affairs has been hitherto established, to adopt such form of government as shall, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular, and America in general."—*Journals*, May 10th.

tiplicity of business before them, to get them to bestow any part of their attention on his request. He is now desirous of trying his hand on the ships that are gone up the North River; and, as he proposes to work entirely at his own expense, and only desires your countenance and permission, I could not refuse his desire of a line of introduction to you, the trouble of which I beg you to excuse. As he appears to be a very ingenious man, I hope his project may be attended with success. With the sincerest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXXI

### TO HORATIO GATES

PHILADELPHIA, 28 August, 1776.

DEAR SIR:—The Congress being advised, that there was a probability that the Hessians might be induced to quit the British service by offers of land, came to two resolves for this purpose, which, being translated into German and printed, are sent to Staten Island to be distributed, if practicable, among those people. Some of them have tobacco marks on the back, that so tobacco being put up in them in small quantities, as the tobacconists use, and suffered to fall into the hands of these people, they might divide the papers as plunder, before their officers could come to the knowledge of the contents, and prevent their being read by the men. That was the first resolve. A second has since been made for

the officers themselves. I am desired to send some of both sorts to you, that, if you find it practicable, you may convey them among the Germans that shall come against you.

The Congress continue firmly united, and we begin to distress the enemy's trade very much; many valuable prizes being continually brought in. Arms and ammunition are also continually arriving, the French having resolved to permit the exportation to us, as they heartily wish us success; so that in another year we shall be well provided.

As you may not have seen Dr. Price's excellent pamphlet, for writing which the city of London presented him a freedom in a gold box of fifty pounds' value, I send you one of them.

My last advices from England say that the ministry have done their utmost in fitting out this armament, and that if it fails they cannot find means next year to go on with the war. While I am writing comes an account that the armies were engaged on Long Island, the event unknown, which throws us into anxious suspense. God grant success. I am, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXXII

### SKETCH OF PROPOSITIONS FOR A PEACE [1]

There shall be a perpetual peace between Great Britain and the United States of America, on the following conditions.

[1] On the 26th of September, 1776, Dr. Franklin was appointed one of the Commissioners from Congress to the Court of France. Before

Great Britain shall renounce and disclaim all pretence of right or authority to govern in any of the United States of America.

To prevent those occasions of misunderstanding, which are apt to arise where the territories of different powers border on each other, through the bad conduct of frontier inhabitants on both sides, Britain shall cede to the United States the provinces or colonies of Quebec, St. John's, Nova Scotia, Bermuda, East and West Florida, and the Bahama Islands, with all their adjoining and intermediate territories now claimed by her.

In return for this cession, the United States shall pay to Great Britain the sum of ——— sterling, in annual payments; that is to say, —— per annum, for and during the terms of —— years,

And shall, moreover, grant a free trade to all British subjects throughout the United States and the ceded colonies, and shall guarantee to Great Britain the possession of her islands in the West Indies.

### *Motives for Proposing a Peace at This Time*

1. The having such propositions in charge will, by the law of nations, be some protection to the commissioners or ambassadors, if they should be taken.

2. As the news of our declared independence will tend to unite in Britain all parties against us, so our

his departure he sketched a brief outline of the terms upon which he supposed a peace might be made with Great Britain, in case an opportunity for a negotiation should offer. His propositions were submitted to the secret committee of Congress, but no occasion presented itself for using them.

offering peace, with commerce and payments of money, will tend to divide them again. For peace is as necessary to them as to us; our commerce is wanted by their merchants and manufacturers, who will therefore incline to the accommodation, even though the monopoly is not continued, since it can be easily made to appear their *share* of our growing trade will soon be greater than the *whole* has been heretofore. Then, for the landed interest, who wish an alleviation of taxes, it is demonstrable by figures, that, if we should agree to pay, suppose ten millions in one hundred years, viz., one hundred thousand pounds per annum for that term, it would, being faithfully employed as a sinking fund, more than pay off all their present national debt. It is, besides, a prevailing opinion in England, that they must in the nature of things sooner or later lose the colonies, and many think they had better be without the government of them; so that the proposition will, on that account, have more supporters and fewer opposers.

3. As the having such propositions to make, or any powers to treat of peace, will furnish a pretence for B. F.'s going to England, where he has many friends and acquaintances, particularly among the best writers and ablest speakers in both Houses of Parliament, he thinks he shall be able when there, if the terms are not accepted, to work up such a division of sentiments in the nation, as greatly to weaken its exertions against the United States, and lessen its credit in foreign countries.

4. The knowledge of there being powers given to the commissioners to treat with England, may have

some effect in facilitating and expediting the proposed treaty with France.

5. It is worth our while to offer such a sum for the countries to be ceded, since the vacant lands will in time sell for a great part of what we shall give, if not more; and, if we are to obtain them by conquest, after perhaps a long war, they will probably cost us more than that sum. It is absolutely necessary for us to have them for our own security; and though the sum may seem large to the present generation, in less than half the term it will be to the whole United States a mere trifle.

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## DCXXIII

### TO PHILIP MAZZEI

PHILADELPHIA. [Date uncertain.]

DEAR SIR:—It was with great pleasure that I learned from Mr. Jefferson that you were settled in America; and, from the letter you favored me with, that you liked the country, and have reasons to expect success in your laudable and meritorious endeavors to introduce new products. I heartily wish you all the success you can desire in that, and every other laudable undertaking that may conduce to your comfortable establishment in your present situation. I know not how it has happened that you have not received an answer from the secretary of our society. I suppose they must have written, and that it has miscarried. If you have not

yet sent the books which the Academy of Turin have done us the honor to present us with, we must, I fear, wait for more quiet times before we can have the pleasure of receiving them, the communication being now very difficult.

All America is obliged to the Grand Duke for his benevolence to it, and for the protection he afforded you, and his encouragement of your undertaking. We have experienced that silk may be produced to great advantage. While in London I had some trunks full sent to me from hence, three years successively; and it sold by auction for nineteen shillings and sixpence the small pound, which was not much below the silk of Italy.

The Congress have not yet extended their views much towards foreign powers. They are nevertheless obliged by your kind offers of your service, which perhaps in a year or two more may become very useful to them. I am myself much pleased that you have sent a translation of our Declaration of Independence to the Grand Duke; because, having a high esteem for the character of that prince, and of the whole imperial family, from the accounts given me of them by my friend, Dr. Ingenhousz and yourself, I should be happy to find that we stood well in the opinion of that court.

Mr. Tromond of Milan, with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted in London, spoke to me of a plant much used in Italy, and which he thought might be useful in America. He promised, at my request, to find me some of the seeds, which he has accordingly done. I have unfortunately forgotten

the use and know nothing of the culture. In both these particulars I must beg information and advice from you. It is called *ravizzoni*. I send specimens of the seed inclosed. I received from the same Mr. Tromond four copies of a translation of some of my pieces into the fine language of your native country. I beg your acceptance of one of them, and of my best wishes for your health and prosperity. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXXIV

### CORRESPONDENCE AND INTERVIEW WITH LORD HOWE [1]

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#### FROM LORD HOWE

"*Eagle*," 20 June, 1776.

I cannot, my worthy friend, permit the letters and parcels, which I have sent in the state I received

[1] Near the beginning of the year 1776, Lord Howe was appointed to command the British fleet in North America, and on the 3d of May was declared joint commissioner with his brother, General William Howe, for the purpose of endeavoring to effect a reconciliation with the colonies, conformable to the terms of an act of Parliament. In the first part of July Lord Howe arrived at Staten Island, where he found his brother with the British army. He had previously prepared a *Declaration* announcing the object of his mission, which he designed for distribution in the colonies, accompanied by circular-letters to the royal governors. Copies of these papers were forwarded to Congress, by whose orders they were immediately published. Lord Howe likewise wrote a private letter to Dr. Franklin, then a member of Congress, which he answered.

Meantime, as Congress took no steps to meet the advances of the British commissioners, in their proposals for reconciliation, they com-

them, to be landed, without adding a word upon the subject of the injurious extremities in which our unhappy differences have engaged us.

You will learn the nature of my mission from the official despatches, which I have recommended to be forwarded by the same conveyance. Retaining all the earnestness I ever expressed to see our differences accommodated, I shall conceive, if I meet with the disposition in the colonies I was once taught to expect, the most flattering hopes of proving serviceable in the objects of the king's paternal solicitude, by promoting the establishment of lasting peace and

menced military operations, and the battle of Long Island was fought. General Sullivan was taken prisoner in this action, and conducted on board Lord Howe's ship. At his request General Sullivan went to Philadelphia on parole, having in charge certain verbal communications to Congress, tending to open the way to some method of effecting the objects of the commissioners. After maturely considering the subject, Congress resolved to send a committee of their members to hold a conference with Lord Howe. The persons selected for this mission were Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge.

In regard to the previous correspondence mentioned above, the following memorandum was afterwards written by Dr. Franklin.

"These letters were published in London, to show the insolence of the *insurgents*, in refusing the offer of pardon upon submission, made to them by the British plenipotentiaries. They undoubtedly deserve the attention of the public for another reason, the proof they afford that the commerce of America is deemed by the ministry themselves of such vast importance, as to justify the horrid and expensive war they are now waging to maintain the monopoly of it; that being the principal cause stated by Lord Howe; though their pensioned writers and speakers in Parliament have affected to treat that commerce as a trifle. And they demonstrate further, of how much importance it is to the rest of Europe, that the continuance of that monopoly should be obstructed, and the general freedom of trade, now offered by the Americans, prevented; since by no other means the enormous growing power of Britain both by sea and land, so formidable to their neighbors, and which must follow her success, can possibly be prevented."—SPARKS.

union with the colonies. But, if the deep-rooted prejudices of America, and the necessity for preventing her trade from passing into foreign channels, must keep us still a divided people, I shall, from every private as well as public motive, most heartily lament that this is not the moment wherein those great objects of my ambition are to be attained, and that I am to be longer deprived of an opportunity to assure you personally of the regard with which I am your sincere and faithful humble servant,

HOWE.

P. S.—I was disappointed of the opportunity I expected for sending this letter at the time it was dated, and have ever since been prevented by calms and contrary winds from getting here, to inform General Howe of the commission with which I have the satisfaction to be charged, and of his being joined in it.

Off Sandy Hook, 12th of July.

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TO LORD HOWE

PHILADELPHIA, 20 July, 1776.

MY LORD:—I received safe the letters your lordship so kindly forwarded to me, and beg you to accept my thanks.

The official despatches, to which you refer me, contain nothing more than what we had seen in the act of Parliament, viz., offers of pardon upon submission, which I am sorry to find, as it must give your lordship pain to be sent so far on so hopeless a business.

Directing pardons to be offered the colonies, who

are the very parties injured, expresses indeed that opinion of our ignorance, baseness, and insensibility, which your uninformed and proud nation has long been pleased to entertain of us; but it can have no other effect than that of increasing our resentment. It is impossible we should think of submission to a government, that has with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty burnt our defenceless towns in the midst of winter, excited the savages to massacre our farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters, and is even now bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood. These atrocious injuries have extinguished every remaining spark of affection for that parent country we once held so dear; but, were it possible for *us* to forget and forgive them, it is not possible for *you* (I mean the British nation) to forgive the people you have so heavily injured. You can never confide again in those as fellow-subjects, and permit them to enjoy equal freedom, to whom you know you have given such just cause of lasting enmity. And this must impel you, were we again under your government, to endeavor the breaking our spirit by the severest tyranny, and obstructing, by every means in your power, our growing strength and prosperity.

But your lordship mentions "the king's paternal solicitude for promoting the establishment of lasting *peace* and union with the colonies." If by peace is here meant a peace to be entered into between Britain and America, as distinct states now at war, and his Majesty has given your lordship powers to treat with us of such a peace, I may venture to say, though

without authority, that I think a treaty for that purpose not yet quite impracticable, before we enter into foreign alliances. But I am persuaded you have no such powers. Your nation, though, by punishing those American governors who have created and fomented the discord; rebuilding our burnt towns, and repairing as far as possible the mischiefs done us, might yet recover a great share of our regard, and the greatest part of our growing commerce, with all the advantage of that additional strength to be derived from a friendship with us; but I know too well her abounding pride and deficient wisdom, to believe she will ever take such salutary measures. Her fondness for conquest, as a warlike nation, her lust of dominion as an ambitious one, and her thirst for a gainful monopoly as a commercial one (none of them legitimate causes of war), will all join to hide from her eyes every view of her true interests, and continually goad her on in those ruinous distant expeditions, so destructive both of lives and treasure, that must prove as pernicious to her in the end, as the crusades formerly were to most of the nations of Europe.

I have not the vanity, my lord, to think of intimidating by thus predicting the effects of this war; for I know it will in England have the fate of all my former predictions, not to be believed till the event shall verify it.

Long did I endeavor, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble china vase, the British empire; for I knew that, being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their share of the strength or value that

existed in the whole, and that a perfect reunion of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for. Your Lordship may possibly remember the tears of joy that wet my cheek, when, at your good sister's in London, you once gave me expectations that a reconciliation might soon take place. I had the misfortune to find those expectations disappointed, and to be treated as the cause of the mischief I was laboring to prevent. My consolation under that groundless and malevolent treatment was, that I retained the friendship of many wise and good men in that country, and, among the rest, some share in the regard of Lord Howe.

The well-founded esteem, and, permit me to say, affection, which I shall always have for your lordship, makes it painful to me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which, as expressed in your letter, is "the necessity of preventing the American trade from passing into foreign channels." To me it seems, that neither the obtaining or retaining of any trade, how valuable soever, is an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce is the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profit of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it, and of holding it, by fleets and armies.

I consider this war against us, therefore, as both unjust and unwise; and I am persuaded that cool, dispassionate posterity will condemn to infamy those who advised it; and that even success will not save from some degree of dishonor those who volun-

tarily engaged to conduct it. I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a reconciliation; and I believe, when you find *that* impossible on any terms given you to propose, you will relinquish so odious a command, and return to a more honorable private station.

With the greatest and most sincere respect, I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.[1]

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FROM LORD HOWE

"*Eagle*," off Staten Island, 16 August, 1776.

I am sorry, my worthy friend, that it is only on the assurances you give me of my having still preserved a place in your esteem, that I can now found a pretension to trouble you with a reply to your favor of the 20th past.

I can have no difficulty to acknowledge, that the powers I am invested with were never calculated to negotiate a reunion with America, under any

[1] Colonel William Palfrey, Paymaster-General of the American Army, went on board Lord Howe's vessel, July 30, 1776, to make some arrangement for an exchange of prisoners, who had been captured at sea. He was accompanied by Mr. Nathaniel Tracy, who carried with him the above letter from Dr. Franklin to Lord Howe. In a letter to President Hancock, written the next day, Colonel Palfrey says:

"Mr. Tracy delivered the letter from Dr. Franklin, which he (Lord Howe) read. I watched his countenance, and observed him often to exhibit marks of surprise. When he had finished reading it, he said his old friend had expressed himself very warmly; that, when he had the pleasure of seeing him in England, he made him acquainted with his sentiments respecting the dispute between Great Britain and

other description than as subject to the crown of Great Britain. But I do esteem those powers competent, not only to confer and negotiate with any gentlemen of influence in the colonies upon the terms, but also to effect a lasting peace and reunion between the two countries, were the temper of the colonies such as professed in the last petition of the Congress to the king. America would have judged in the discussion how far the means were adequate to the end, both for engaging her confidence and proving our integrity. Nor did I think it necessary to say more in my public declaration, not conceiving it could be understood to refer to peace on any other conditions but those of mutual interest to both countries, which could alone render it permanent.

But, as I perceive from the tenor of your letter, how little I am to reckon upon the advantage of your assistance, for restoring that permanent union which has long been the object of my endeavors, and which, I flattered myself when I left England, would be in the compass of my power; I will only add that, as the dishonor to which you deem me exposed by my military situation in this country

the colonies, and with his earnest desire that a reconciliation might take place, equally honorable and advantageous to both. Possessed of these sentiments, and the most ardent desire to be the means of effecting this union, he had accepted the honor the king had done him in appointing him one of the commissioners; and that unfortunately a long passage prevented his arriving here before the declaration of independence. I told him he had now a fair opportunity to mention to his friend, Dr. Franklin, in a private letter, his design in coming out, and what his expectations from America were. This he declined, saying, that the Doctor had grown too warm, and, if he expressed his sentiments fully to him, he should only give him pain, which he would wish to avoid."

has effected no change in your sentiments of personal regard towards me, so shall no difference in political points alter my desire of proving how much I am your sincere and obedient humble servant,

HOWE.

*In Congress, September 2, 1776.*—Congress being informed that General Sullivan, who was taken prisoner on Long Island, was come to Philadelphia with a message from Lord Howe,

Ordered, that he be admitted and heard before Congress.

General Sullivan being admitted, delivered the verbal message he had in charge from Lord Howe, which he desired to reduce to writing, and withdrew.

*September 3d.*—General Sullivan having reduced to writing the verbal message from Lord Howe, the same was laid before Congress and read as follows:

"That, though he could not at present treat with Congress, as such, yet he was desirous of having a conference with some of the members, whom he would consider for the present only as private gentlemen, and meet them himself as such, at such place as they should appoint.

"That he, in conjunction with General Howe, had full powers to compromise the disputes between Great Britain and America on terms advantageous to both, the obtaining of which delayed him near two months in England, and prevented his arrival at this place before the declaration of independence took place.

"That he wished a compact might be settled at this time, when no decisive blow was struck, and neither party could say they were compelled to enter into such agreement.

"That, in case Congress were disposed to treat, many things which they had not as yet asked, might and ought to be granted to them; and that, if, upon the conference, they found any probable ground of accommodation, the authority of Congress must be afterwards acknowledged, otherwise the compact could not be complete."

*September 5th.*—Resolved, that General Sullivan be requested to inform Lord Howe, that this Congress, being the representatives of the free and independent States of America, cannot, with propriety, send any of its members to confer with his lordship in their private characters, but that, ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will send a committee of their body to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorized by Congress for that purpose on behalf of America, and what that authority is, and to hear such propositions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same.

Ordered, that a copy of the foregoing resolution be delivered to General Sullivan, and that he be directed immediately to repair to Lord Howe.

*September 6th.*—Resolved, that the committee "to be sent to know whether Lord Howe has any authority to treat with persons authorized by Congress for that purpose, in behalf of America, and what that authority is, and to hear such propositions

as he shall think fit to make respecting the same," consist of three.

Congress then proceeded to the election, and, the ballots being taken, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Rutledge were elected.[1]

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TO LORD HOWE

PHILADELPHIA, 8 September, 1776.

MY LORD:—I received your favor of the 16th past. I did not immediately answer it, because I found that my corresponding with your lordship was disliked by some members of Congress. I hope now soon to have an opportunity of discussing with you, *viva voce*, the matters mentioned in it; as I am, with Mr. Adams and Mr. Rutledge, appointed to wait on your lordship, in consequence of a desire you expressed at some conversation with General Sullivan, and of a resolution of Congress made thereupon, which that gentleman has probably before this time communicated to you.

We propose to set out on our journey to-morrow morning, and to be at Amboy on Wednesday about nine o'clock, where we should be glad to meet a line from your lordship, appointing the time and place of meeting. If it would be agreeable to your lordship, we apprehend that, either at the house on Staten Island, opposite to Amboy, or at the governor's house in Amboy, we might be accommodated with a room for the purpose. With the greatest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, my lord, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

[1] See Franklin to Howe, above.

FROM LORD HOWE

"*Eagle*," off Bedlow's Island, September 10, 1776.

Lord Howe presents his compliments to Dr. Franklin, and according to the tenor of his favor of the 8th, will attend to have the pleasure of meeting him and Messrs. Adams and Rutledge to-morrow morning, at the house on Staten Island opposite to Amboy, as early as the few conveniences for travelling by land on Staten Island will admit. Lord Howe upon his arrival at the place appointed, will send a boat (if he can procure it in time), with a flag of truce, over to Amboy; and requests the Doctor and the other gentlemen will postpone their intended favor of passing over to meet him, until they are informed as above of his arrival to attend them there.

In case the weather should prove unfavorable for Lord Howe to pass in his boat to Staten Island to-morrow, as from the present appearance there is some reason to suspect, he will take the next earliest opportunity that offers for that purpose. In this intention he may be further retarded, having been an invalid lately; but will certainly give the most timely notice of that inability. He, however, flatters himself he shall not have occasion to make further excuses on that account.[1]

[1] The committee being arrived at Amboy, opposite to the island and in possession of the Americans, the admiral sent over his barge to receive and bring them to him, and to leave one of his principal officers as a hostage for their safe return. The committee of Congress had not desired a hostage, and they therefore took the officer back with them. The admiral met them at their landing, and conducted them through his guards to a convenient room for conference.—W. T. F.

*In Congress, September 13th.*—The committee appointed to confer with Lord Howe, having returned, made a verbal report.

Ordered, that they make a report in writing, as soon as conveniently they can.

*September 17th.*—The committee appointed to confer with Lord Howe, agreeable to order, brought in a report in writing, which was read as follows:

"In obedience to the orders of Congress, we have had a meeting with Lord Howe. It was on Wednesday last, upon Staten Island, opposite to Amboy, where his lordship received and entertained us with the utmost politeness.

"His lordship opened the conversation by acquainting us that, though he could not treat with us as a committee of Congress, yet, as his powers enabled him to confer and consult with any private gentlemen of influence in the colonies, on the means of restoring peace between the two countries, he was glad of this opportunity of conferring with us on that subject, if we thought ourselves at liberty to enter into a conference with him in that character.

"We observed to his lordship that, as our business was to hear, he might consider us in what light he pleased, and communicate to us any proposition he might be authorized to make for the purpose mentioned; but that we could consider ourselves in no other character than that in which we were placed by order of Congress.

"His lordship then entered into a discourse of considerable length, which contained no explicit

proposition of peace except one, namely, that the colonies should return to their allegiance and obedience to the government of Great Britain. The rest consisted principally of assurances that there was an exceeding good disposition in the king and his ministers to make that government easy to us, with intimations that in case of our submission they would cause the offensive acts of Parliament to be revised, and the instructions to governors to be reconsidered; that so, if any just causes of complaint were found in the acts, or any errors in government were perceived to have crept into the instructions, they might be amended or withdrawn.

"We gave it as our opinion to his lordship that a return to the domination of Great Britain was not now to be expected. We mentioned the repeated humble petitions of the colonies to the king and Parliament, which had been treated with contempt, and answered only by additional injuries; the unexampled patience we had shown under their tyrannical government; and that it was not till the last act of Parliament, which denounced war against us, and put us out of the king's protection, that we declared our independence; that this declaration had been called for by the people of the colonies in general; that every colony had approved of it, when made; and all now considered themselves as independent States, and were settling or had settled their governments accordingly; so that it was not in the power of Congress to agree for them that they should return to their former dependent state; that there

was no doubt of their inclination to peace, and their willingness to enter into a treaty with Britain that might be advantageous to both countries; that, though his lordship had at present no power to treat with them as independent States, he might, if there was the same good disposition in Britain, much sooner obtain fresh powers from thence, than powers could be obtained by Congress from the several colonies to consent to a submission.

"His lordship then saying that he was sorry to find that no accommodation was likely to take place, put an end to the conference.

"Upon the whole, it did not appear to your committee that his lordship's commission contained any other authority of importance than what is expressed in the act of Parliament, namely, that of granting pardons, with such exceptions as the commissioners shall think proper to make, and of declaring America, or any part of it, to be in the king's peace, upon submission; for, as to the power of inquiring into the state of America, which his lordship mentioned to us, and of conferring and consulting with any persons the commissioners might think proper, and representing the result of such conversation to the ministry, who, provided the colonies would subject themselves, might, after all, or might not, at their pleasure, make any alterations in their former instructions to governors, or propose in Parliament any amendment of the acts complained of, we apprehended any expectation from the effect of such a power would have been too uncertain and precarious to be relied on by

America, had she still continued in her state of dependence."

Ordered that the above be published.

JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*

Attest, CHAS. THOMPSON, *Secretary.*

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## DCXXV

### TO THOMAS MORRIS

(*Translated* [1])

AURAY IN BRITTANY, 4 December, 1776.

I arrived here on board the *Reprisal*, Capt. Wickes, now at anchor in Quiberon Bay, where she is waiting for wind to get up to Nantes. I have many letters and large packages for you, and as I count upon leaving Nantes by post, I hope to have the pleasure of delivering them to you. I only send one of them now, not being sure that the others will not be opened at the post. Besides, they will cost you very dear. If our friends at Nantes think proper, I will send your packages, and those for Mr. Deane, by express, so that you will have them almost as soon as if sent by post.

When I left, our armies were very near each other, about 18 miles from New York. There had been no general action, though one was expected every day. In various skirmishes our forces had beaten the

[1] This letter is retranslated from a French translation of it found among the archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—EDITOR.

enemy of equal or superior force, and our army is full of courage. There are daily arrivals in our ports of captures made from the enemy. We made two on our passage over of twenty days.[1]

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## DCXXVI

### TO SILAS DEANE

AURAY IN BRITTANY, 4 December, 1776.

I have just arrived on board the *Reprisal*, Captain Wickes, a small vessel of war belonging to Congress. We are in Quiberon Bay, awaiting a favorable wind to go on to Nantes. We left the Cape the 29th of October, and have been but 30 days from land to land. I remained on board three days after we dropped anchor, hoping to be able to go up to Nantes in our ship, but the wind continuing unfavorable, I came here to go on by land to Nantes.

Congress in September named you, Mr. Jefferson, and myself, to negotiate a treaty of commerce and friendship with the court of France. Mr. Jefferson, then in Virginia, declined. Thereupon Mr. Arthur Lee, at present in London, was named in his place. Our vessel has brought indigo for the account of

[1] The story was rife in Europe that Franklin had fled from America when he came to France as the agent of the colonies. "I never will believe," said Burke, "that he is going to conclude a long life, which has brightened every hour it has continued, with so foul and dishonorable a flight."

Congress, to the value of about £3,000 sterling, subject to our order, to meet our expenses. Congress has appropriated, in addition, £7,000 for the same object, which the committee will transmit as soon as possible.

I find myself here as near to Paris as I shall be at Nantes, but I am obliged to go there to provide myself with money for my journey, and to get my baggage, which was left on the ship. I shall endeavor to join you as soon as possible. I propose to retain my *incognito* until I ascertain whether the court will receive ministers from the United States. I have several letters for you from the committee, which I do not send forward because I know they contain matters of consequence, and I am not certain of their safety in that way. Besides, as I intend to take the post at Nantes, I imagine it will make but three or four days difference. We fell in with two brigantines at sea, one Irish and the other English, which we captured and brought into Nantes.

I do not know that the captain can get permission to sell them here, as that would be in contradiction of the treaties between the two crowns. They are worth about £4,000. We have had a tedious passage, and I am weak, but hope that the good air which I breathe on land will soon reëstablish me, that I may travel with speed to join you in Paris, and there find you in good health.

P. S.—If you could find some means to notify Mr. Lee of his nomination, it would be well to do so. Perhaps the best way would be through the Depart-

ment of Foreign affairs and the French Ambassador. The regular post would not be safe.

I beg you to procure lodgings for me.[1]

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## DCXXVII

### TO M. BARBEU DUBOURG

AURAY IN BRITTANY, 4 December, 1776.

My dear good friend will be much surprised to receive a letter from me dated in France, when

[1] This letter is translated from a copy in French in the *Archives des Affaries Étrangères* at Paris.

Four days after this letter was despatched, Mr. Deane addressed the following note to M. de Vergennes:

"PARIS, December 8, 1776.

"SIR:—I received last evening a letter from my friend Dr. Franklin at Nantes, which place he was to leave last Sunday morning, so that I expect him in Paris this day or early to-morrow. Meantime I have and shall carefully attend to the hint given me, and am confident he will do the same.

"His arrival is the common topic of conversation and has given birth to a thousand conjectures and reports, not one of which I have given ground for, having constantly declared that I am ignorant of the motives of his voyage. I have the honor to be., etc.,

"SILAS DEANE."

Deane, writing to the Committee of Secret Correspondence on the 12th Dec., after mentioning the receipt of Dr. Franklin's letter announcing his arrival at Nantes, adds: "Nothing has for a long time created greater speculation than this event, and our friends here are elated beyond measure, as this confirms them you will not negotiate with England; and for me, I will not attempt to express the pleasure I feel on this occasion, as it removes at once difficulties under which I have been constantly in danger of sinking."—*The Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution.* Vol. I., p. 101.

The hint referred to in Deane's letter to Vergennes, to which he had attended and expected Franklin to attend to, was probably given him by Vergennes, at their first interview, when Vergennes told that the British Ambassador (Stormont) knew of his, Deane's, arrival, and he therefore advised him not to associate with Englishmen more than he was obliged to, as he doubted not Deane would have many spies on his conduct.—EDITOR.

neither of us had been expecting such a thing. I left Philadelphia the 26th of October, on a vessel of war belonging to Congress, and in thirty days dropped anchor in Quiberon Bay. On our voyage we captured two British vessels and brought them with us. Our ship is destined for Nantes, but the wind being unfavorable to entering the Loire, we waited some days in Quiberon Bay, until becoming impatient to put my feet on the land, I availed myself of a boat to get here, whence I shall go by land to Nantes, where I shall probably rest for a few days. Learning that the post leaves here this evening, I seize the opportunity to salute you, as well as my dear Madame Dubourg and Mesdlles. Prehesson and Basseport, whom I hope soon to have the pleasure of finding in good health.

I suppose that Messrs. Deane and Morris have the honor of being known to you, and as I do not know their address, I take the liberty of addressing each of them a word under your cover, and beg you to transmit it to them. I shall see to the reimbursement of your expenses.

I see that you have had bad news of our affairs in America, but they are not true. The British, with the assistance of their ships, have gained a footing in two islands, but they have not extended their foothold on the continent, where we hold them at a respectful distance. Our armies were one or two miles apart when I left, and both entrenched. In different skirmishes which had occurred lately between parties of five hundred and a thousand men on each side, we have always had the advantage, and

have driven them from the field with loss, our fire being more destructive than theirs. On the sea we have seriously molested their commerce, taking large numbers of their ships in the West Indies, which are daily brought to our ports. But I do not care to dwell upon these subjects until I shall have the pleasure of seeing you.[1]

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## DCXXVIII

### TO JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS[2]

NANTES, 8 December, 1776.

SIR:—In thirty days after we left the Capes of Delaware we came to an anchor in Quiberon Bay. I remained on board four days, expecting a change of wind proper to carry the ship into the river Loire; but the wind seemed fixed in an opposite quarter. I landed at Auray, and with some difficulty got

[1] This letter is translated from a French copy in the *Archives des Affaires Étrangères* at Paris.—EDITOR.

[2] In March, 1776, Mr. Silas Deane, who had been a member of Congress, was sent to France by the Committee of Secret Correspondence, to act as a political and commercial agent for the United States. On the 26th of September, three commissioners were appointed by Congress to take charge of the American affairs in Europe, and endeavor to procure a treaty of alliance with the court of France. These commissioners were Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Thomas Jefferson. The appointment was declined by Mr. Jefferson for domestic reasons, and his place was supplied by Arthur Lee, on the 22d of October. Mr. Lee was then in London and Mr. Deane in Paris. Dr. Franklin sailed from Philadelphia on the 26th of October, and the vessel entered Quiberon Bay, November 29th. He proceeded thence by way of Nantes to Paris, where he arrived about the 20th of December, and where he found Mr. Deane. They were joined by Mr. Lee the day after Dr. Franklin's arrival.

hither, the road not being well supplied with means of conveyance. Two days before we saw land, we met a brigantine from Bordeaux belonging to Cork, and another from Rochefort belonging to Hull, both of which were taken. The first had on board staves, tar, turpentine, and claret; the other cognac brandy and flaxseed. There is some difficulty in determining what to do with them; as they are scarce worth sending to America, and the mind of the French court, with regard to prizes brought into their ports, is not yet known. It is certainly contrary to their treaties with Britain to permit the sale of them, and we have no regular means of trying and condemning them. There are, however, many here who would purchase prizes, we having already had several offers from persons who are willing to take upon themselves all consequences as to the illegality. Captain Wickes, as soon as he can get his refreshment, intends to cruise in the Channel.

Our friends in France have been a good deal dejected with the *Gazette* accounts of advantages obtained against us by the British troops. I have helped them here to recover their spirits a little, by assuring them, that we still face the enemy, and were under no apprehension of their armies being able to complete their junction. I understand that Mr. Lee has lately been at Paris, that Mr. Deane is still there, and that an underhand supply is obtained from the government of two hundred brass field-pieces, thirty thousand firelocks, and some other military stores, which are now shipping for America, and will be convoyed by a ship of war. The court of

England (M. Penet tells me, from whom I had the above intelligence) had the folly to demand Mr. Deane to be delivered up, but were refused.

Our voyage, though not long, was rough, and I feel myself weakened by it; but I now recover strength daily, and in a few days shall be able to undertake the journey to Paris. I have not yet taken any public character, thinking it prudent first to know whether the court is ready and willing to receive ministers publicly from the Congress; that we may neither embarrass it on the one hand, nor subject ourselves to the hazard of a disgraceful refusal on the other. I have despatched an express to Mr. Deane, with the letters that I had for him from the committee and a copy of our commission, that he may immediately make the proper inquiries, and give me information. In the meantime I find it generally supposed here that I am sent to negotiate; and that opinion appears to give great pleasure, if I can judge by the extreme civilities I meet with from numbers of the principal people who have done me the honor to visit me.

I have desired Mr. Deane, by some speedy and safe means, to give Mr. Lee notice of his appointment. I find several vessels here laden with military stores for America, just ready to sail. On the whole, there is the greatest prospect that we shall be well provided for another campaign, and much stronger than we were last. A Spanish fleet has sailed with seven thousand land forces foot, and some horse. Their destination is unknown, but supposed against the Portuguese in Brazil. Both France and England

are preparing strong fleets, and it is said that all the powers of Europe are preparing for war, apprehending that a general one cannot be very far distant. When I arrive at Paris, I shall be able to write with more certainty. I beg you to present my duty to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful endeavors in their service. With the sincerest esteem and respect I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXXIX

### TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

NANTES, 8 December, 1776.

GENTLEMEN:—After a short but rough passage of thirty days, we anchored in Quiberon Bay, the wind not suiting to enter the Loire. Captain Wickes did every thing in his power to make the voyage comfortable to me; and I was much pleased with what I saw of his conduct as an officer, when on supposed occasions we made preparation for engagement, the good order and readiness with which it was done being far beyond my expectations, and I believe equal to any thing of the kind in the best ships of the king's fleet. He seems to have also a very good set of officers under him. I hope they will all in good time be promoted. He met, and took two prizes, brigantines, one belonging to Cork, laden with staves, pitch, tar, turpentine, and claret; the other, to Hull, with a cargo of flaxseed and brandy. The captains have made some propositions of ransom,

which, perhaps, may be accepted, as there is yet no means of condemning them here, and they are scarce worth sending to America. The ship is yet in Quiberon Bay with her prizes. I came hither from thence, seventy miles, by land. I am made extremely welcome here, where America has many friends. As soon as I have recovered strength enough for the journey, which I hope will be in a very few days, I shall set out for Paris. My letter to the President will inform you of some other particulars. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—*December 10th.*—I have just learned that eighty pieces of cannon, all brass, with carriages, braces, and every thing fit for immediate service, were embarked in a frigate from Havre, which is sailed; the rest were to go in another frigate of thirty-six guns.

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## DCXXX

### TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES

PARIS, 23 December, 1776.

SIR:—We beg leave to acquaint your Excellency that we are appointed and fully empowered by the Congress of the United States of America to propose and negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce between France and the United States. The just and generous treatment their trading ships have received by a free admission into the ports of this kingdom, with other considerations of respect, has

induced the Congress to make this offer first to France. We request an audience of your Excellency, wherein we may have an opportunity of presenting our credentials, and we flatter ourselves that the propositions we are authorized to make are such as will not be found unacceptable.

With the greatest regard, we have the honor to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient
and most humble servants,

B. FRANKLIN,
SILAS DEANE,
ARTHUR LEE.

HIS EXCELLENCY, THE COUNT
DE VERGENNES.

*Endorsement*

The original of the above, in the handwriting of Dr. Franklin, is in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Paris, where, by the courtesy of the Duke Decaze, this photograph has been taken.

E. B. WASHBURNE.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
PARIS, July 16, 1887.

## DCXXXI

### COMPARISON OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES IN REGARD TO THE BASIS OF CREDIT IN THE TWO COUNTRIES [1]

In borrowing money, a man's credit depends on some, or all, of the following particulars.

First. His known conduct respecting former loans, and his punctuality in discharging them.

Secondly. His industry.

Thirdly. His frugality.

Fourthly. The amount and certainty of his income, and the freedom of his estate from the incumbrances of prior debts.

Fifthly. His well-founded prospects of greater future ability, by the improvement of his estate in value, and by aids from others.

Sixthly. His known prudence in managing his general affairs, and the advantage they will probably receive from the loan which he desires.

Seventhly. His known probity and honest character, manifested by his voluntary discharge of debts, which he could not have been legally compelled to pay. The circumstances which give credit to an *individual*, ought to have, and will have their weight upon the lenders of money to *public bodies* or nations.

[1] This paper was written in the year 1777, while Franklin was one of the Commissioners of the United States in France. The object was to produce in Europe a just impression of the resources and political condition and prospects of the United States, with the view of encouraging governments and private capitalists to loan money to the American Congress. It was translated into various languages and widely circulated.—EDITOR.

If then we consider and compare Britain and America in these several particulars, upon the question, "To which is it safest to lend money?" we shall find:

1. Respecting *former loans*, that America, who borrowed ten millions during the last war, for the maintenance of her army of twenty-five thousand men and other charges, had faithfully discharged and paid that debt, and all her other debts, in 1772. Whereas Britain, during those ten years of peace and profitable commerce, had made little or no reduction of her debt; but, on the contrary, from time to time, diminished the hopes of her creditors by a wanton diversion and misapplication of the sinking fund destined for discharging it.

2. Respecting *industry;* every man in America is employed; the greater part in cultivating their own lands, the rest in handicrafts, navigation, and commerce. An idle man there, is a rarity; idleness and inutility are disgraceful. In England the number of that character is immense; fashion has spread it far and wide. Hence the embarrassments of private fortunes, and the daily bankruptcies, arising from a universal fondness for appearance and for expensive pleasures; and hence, in some degree, the mismanagement of public business; for habits of business, and ability in it, are acquired only by practice; and, where universal dissipation and the perpetual pursuit of amusement are the mode, the youth educated in it can rarely afterwards acquire that patient attention and close application to affairs, which are so necessary to a statesman charged with the care of national welfare. Hence their frequent errors in policy, and

hence the weariness at public councils, and backwardness in going to them, the constant unwillingness to engage in any measure that requires thought and consideration, and the readiness for postponing every new proposition; which postponing is, therefore, the only part of business they come to be expert in, an expertness produced necessarily by so much daily practice. Whereas, in America, men bred to close employment in their private affairs attend with ease to those of the public when engaged in them, and nothing fails through negligence.

3. Respecting *frugality;* the manner of living in America is more simple and less expensive than in England; plain tables, plain clothing, and plain furniture in houses prevail, with few carriages of pleasure. There an expensive appearance hurts credit, and is avoided; in England it is often assumed to gain credit, and continued to ruin. Respecting *public* affairs, the difference is still greater. In England the salaries of officers and emoluments of office are enormous. The king has a million sterling per annum, and yet cannot maintain his family free of debt [1]; secretaries of state, lords of the treasury, admiralty, etc., have vast appointments; an auditor of the exchequer has sixpence in the pound, or a fortieth part of all the public money expended by

[1] On the 13th of April of this year, Lord Worth had asked for and obtained from Parliament $3,000,000 to liquidate the pressing demands of his sovereign, and an addition of $500,000 to his yearly income. Many of the tradesmen who supplied the palace with common necessaries had not been paid for years. The coal merchant's bill had reached $30,000. Charles Knight says the annual expense for wax candles was $50,000. The menial servants were nearly two years in arrears. The king had received $4,000,000 annually ever since his

the nation, so that, when a war costs forty millions, one million is paid to him; an inspector of the mint, in the last new coinage, received as his fee £65,000 sterling per annum; to all which rewards no service these gentlemen can render the public, is by any means equivalent. All this is paid by the people, who are oppressed by taxes so occasioned, and thereby rendered less able to contribute to the payment of necessary national debts. In America, salaries, where indispensable, are extremely low; but much of the public business is done gratis. The honor of serving the public ably and faithfully is deemed sufficient. *Public spirit* really exists there, and has great effects. In England it is universally deemed a nonentity, and whoever pretends to it is laughed at as a fool, or suspected as a knave. The committees of Congress, which form the board of war, the board of treasury, the board of foreign affairs, the naval board, that for accounts, etc., all attend the business of their respective functions without any salary or emolument whatever, though they spend in it much more of their time than any lord of the treasury or admiralty in England can spare from his amusements. A British minister lately computed, that the whole expense of the Americans in

accession. No one knew where it had gone. No vouchers were produced, nor were any audit books kept, apparently. The royal establishment swarmed with officers for whom it was difficult to find names. Among the *satellites aulae* was one who was dignified with the title of "Turnspit of the King's Kitchen." It was suspected that no inconsiderable part of the king's debts had been incurred in Parliamentary corruption. It was also whispered that some of the money was sent to France to corrupt the French ministers, especially Vergennes, who was suspected of being a pensioner of Lord Stormont.—EDITOR.

their *civil* government, over three millions of people, amounted to but £70,000 sterling, and drew from thence a conclusion, that they ought to be taxed until their expense was equal in proportion to that which it costs Great Britain to govern eight millions. He had no idea of a contrary conclusion, that, if three millions may be well governed for £70,000, eight millions may be well governed for three times that sum, and that therefore the expense of his own government should be diminished. In that corrupted nation, no man is ashamed of being concerned in lucrative *government jobs*, in which the public money is egregiously misapplied and squandered, the treasury pillaged, and more numerous and heavy taxes accumulated, to the great oppression of the people. But the prospect of a greater number of such jobs by a war, is an inducement with many to cry out for war upon all occasions, and to oppose every proposition of peace. Hence the constant increase of the national debt, and the absolute improbability of its ever being discharged.

4. Respecting the *amount and certainty of income, and solidity of security;* the *whole* thirteen States of America are engaged for the payment of every debt contracted by the Congress, and the debt to be contracted by the present war is the *only* debt they will have to pay; all, or nearly all the former debts of particular colonies being already discharged; whereas England will have to pay, not only the enormous debt this war must occasion, but all their vast preceding debt, or the interest of it; and, while America is enriching itself by prizes made upon the British

commerce, more than it ever did by any commerce of its own, under the restraints of a British monopoly, Britain is growing poorer by the diminution of its revenues, and of course less able to discharge the present indiscreet increase of its expenses.

5. Respecting prospects of greater *future ability*, Britain has none such. Her islands are circumscribed by the ocean; and, excepting a few parks or forests, she has no new land to cultivate, and cannot therefore extend her improvements. Her numbers, too, instead of increasing from increased subsistence, are continually diminishing from growing luxury, and the increasing difficulties of maintaining families, which of course discourage early marriages. Thus she will have fewer people to assist in paying her debts, and that diminishing number will be poorer. America, on the contrary, has, besides her lands already cultivated, a vast territory yet to be cultivated; which, being cultivated, continually increases in value with the increase of people; and the people, who double themselves by a *natural propagation* every twenty-five years, will double yet faster by the accession of *strangers*, as long as lands are to be had for new families; so that every twenty years there will be a double number of inhabitants obliged to discharge the public debts; and those inhabitants, being more opulent, may pay their shares with greater ease.

6. Respecting *prudence* in general affairs, and the advantages to be expected from the loan desired, the Americans are cultivators of land; those engaged in fishery and commerce are few, compared with the

others. They have ever conducted their several governments with wisdom, avoiding wars and vain, expensive projects, delighting only in their peaceable occupations, which must, considering the extent of their uncultivated territory, find them employment still for ages. Whereas England, ever unquiet, ambitious, avaricious, imprudent, and quarrelsome, is half of the time engaged in war, always at an expense infinitely greater than the advantages to be obtained by it, if successful. Thus they made war against Spain in 1739, for a claim of about £95,000 (scarce a groat for each individual of the nation), and spent forty millions sterling in the war, and the lives of fifty thousand men; and finally made peace without obtaining satisfaction for the sum claimed. Indeed, there is scarce a nation in Europe, against which she has not made war on some frivolous pretext or other, and thereby imprudently accumulated a debt that has brought her on the verge of bankruptcy. But the most indiscreet of all her wars is the present against America, with whom she might for ages have preserved her profitable connection only by a just and equitable conduct. She is now acting like a mad shopkeeper, who, by beating those that pass his doors, attempts to make them come in and be his customers. America cannot submit to such treatment, without first being ruined, and, being ruined, her custom will be worth nothing. England, to effect this, is increasing her debt, and irretrievably ruining herself. America, on the other hand, aims only to establish her liberty, and that freedom of commerce which will be advantageous to all Europe;

and, by abolishing that monopoly which she labored under, she will profit infinitely more than enough to repay any debt which she may contract to accomplish it.

7. Respecting *character in the honest payment of debts*, the punctuality with which America has discharged her public debts was shown under the first head. And the general good disposition of the people to such punctuality has been manifested in their faithful payment of *private* debts to England, since the commencement of this war. There were not wanting some politicians (in America), who proposed *stopping that payment*, until peace should be restored, alleging that, in the usual course of commerce, and of the credit given, there was always a debt existing equal to the trade of eighteen months; that, the trade amounting to five millions sterling per annum, the debt must be seven millions and a half; that this sum paid to the British merchants would operate to prevent that distress intended to be brought upon Britain by our stoppage of commerce with her; for the merchants, receiving this money, and no orders with it for further supplies, would either lay it out in public funds, or in employing manufacturers to accumulate goods for a future hungry market in America upon an expected accommodation, by which means the funds would be kept up and the manufacturers prevented from murmuring. But *against this it was alleged* that injuries from ministers should not be revenged on merchants, that the credit was in consequence of private contracts made in confidence of good faith; that these

ought to be held sacred and faithfully complied with; for that, whatever public utility might be supposed to arise from a breach of private faith, it was unjust, and would in the end be found unwise, honesty being in truth the best policy. On this principle the proposition was universally rejected; and though the English prosecuted the war with unexampled barbarity, burning our defenceless towns in the midst of winter, and arming savages against us, the debt was punctually paid, and the merchants of London have testified to the Parliament, and will testify to all the world, that from their experience in dealing with us they had, before the war, no apprehension of our unfairness, and that, since the war, they have been convinced that their good opinion of us was well founded. England, on the contrary, an old, corrupt government, extravagant and profligate nation, sees herself deep in debt, which she is in no condition to pay, and yet is madly and dishonestly running deeper, without any possibility of discharging her debt but by a public bankruptcy.

It appears, therefore, from the general industry, frugality, ability, prudence, and virtue of America, that she is a much safer debtor than Britain; to say nothing of the satisfaction generous minds must have in reflecting that by loans to America they are opposing tyranny, and aiding the cause of liberty, which is the cause of all mankind.

## DCXXXII

### TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

PARIS, 4 January, 1777.

GENTLEMEN:—I arrived here about two weeks since, where I found Mr. Deane. Mr. Lee has since joined us from London. We have had an audience of the minister, Count de Vergennes, and were respectfully received. We left for his consideration a sketch of the proposed treaty. We are to wait upon him to-morrow, with a strong memorial, requesting the aids mentioned in our instructions. By his advice, we have had an interview with the Spanish Ambassador, Count d'Aranda, who seems well disposed towards us, and will forward copies of our memorials to his court, which will act, he says, in perfect concert with this.

Their fleets are said to be in fine order, manned and fit for sea. The cry of the nation is for us, but the court, it is thought, views an approaching war with reluctance. The press continues in England. As soon as we can receive a positive answer from these courts, we shall despatch an express with it. I am, gentlemen, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXXXIII

### TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PARIS, 12 January, 1777.

MY DEAR, DEAR POLLY:—Figure to yourself an old man with gray hair appearing under a martin

fur cap, among the powdered heads of Paris. It is this odd figure that salutes you, with handfuls of blessings on you and your dear little ones.[1]

On my arrival here, Mademoiselle Biheron gave me great pleasure in the perusal of a letter from you to her. It acquainted me that you and yours were well in August last. I have with me here my young grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, a special good boy. I shall give him a little French language and address, and then send him over to pay his respects to Miss Hewson. My love to all that love you, particularly to dear Dolly. I am ever, my dear friend, your affectionate B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—Temple, who attends me here, presents his respects. I must contrive to get you to America. I want all my friends out of that wicked country. I have just seen in the paper seven paragraphs about me, of which six were lies.

[1] The following description of Dr. Franklin's personal appearance was given by the French police only three days after this letter was written.

"Doctor Franklin, who lately arrived in this country from the English colonies, is very much run after, and fêted, not only by his fellow savants, but by all who can get hold of him; for he is difficult to be approached and lives in a seclusion which is supposed to be at the instance of the government. This Quaker wears the full costume of his sect. He has an agreeable physiognomy; spectacles always on his eyes; but little hair,—a fur cap is always on his head. He wears no powder; tidy in his dress; very white linen. His only defence is a walking-stick. If he sees our ministers it is at Paris, at night, and in the greatest secrecy; but he has frequent conference with the Sieurs de Beaumarchais and le Ray de Chaumont. The first of these is the pet of Madame de Maurepas, and probably fetches and carries for her."

## DCXXXIV

### TO JULIANA RITCHIE

PARIS, 19 January, 1777.

MADAM:—I am much obliged to you for your kind attention to my welfare in the information you give me. I have no doubt of its being well founded, but as it is impossible to discover in every case the falsity of pretended friends who would know our affairs, and more so to prevent being watched by spies when interested people may think proper to place them for that purpose,[1] I have long observed one rule which prevents any inconvenience from such practices. It is simply this—to be concerned in no affairs that I would blush to have made public, and to do nothing but what spies may see and welcome. When a man's actions are just and honorable, the more they are known, the more his reputation is increased and established. If I was sure, therefore, that my *valet de place* was a spy, as probably he is, I think I should not discharge him for that, if in other respects I liked him. The various conjectures you mention concerning my business here must have their course. They amuse those that make them and some of those that hear them; they do me no harm, and therefore it is not necessary that I should take the least pains to rectify them. I am glad to learn that you are in a situation that is agreeable to you, and that Mr. Ritchie was lately well. My daughter and her children were so when I left them,

[1] The French Government gave special orders to the police to protect Dr. Franklin.

but I have lost my dear Mrs. Franklin, now two years since. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

## DCXXXV

### TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PARIS, 20 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR:—The bearer, Captain Balm, is strongly recommended to me as a very able officer of horse, and capable of being extremely useful to us in forming a body of men for that service. As he has otherwise an excellent character, I take the liberty of recommending him to my friends as a stranger of merit, worthy of their civilities, and to Congress as an officer, who, if employed, may greatly serve a cause which he has sincerely at heart. With great respect, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

## DCXXXVI

### TO MR. T. MORRIS

PARIS, 26 January, 1777.

SIR:—We have expected some remittances from you to our credit, in consequence of the sales which have been made at Nantes. You must be sensible how very unbecoming it is of the situation we are in, to be dependent on the credit of others. We therefore desire that you will remit with all possible expedition the sum allotted by the Congress for our expenses.

## DCXXXVII

### INSTRUCTIONS TO CAPT. NICHOLSON

PARIS, 26 January, 1777.

SIR:—You are directed to proceed to Boulogne, and there purchase, on as good terms as possible, a cutter suitable for the purpose of being sent to America. The purchase being made, despatch the vessel to Havre de Grace to the care of Mons. Limozin, and agree in the bargain to have her delivered, at said port, at the risk and expense of the original owner, at which stipulate to make the payment. Should you miss of one at Boulogne, proceed to Calais, and pursue the same directions. If you fail there, pass to Dover, or Deal, and employ a person there to make the purchase as for Mr. Limozin of Nantes, at whose house the payment shall be made. Your skill in maritime affairs will enable you to judge of the vessel proper for our purpose, in which we wish you to embark yourself for Havre, and on your arrival, put the vessel into the care of Mr. Limozin, to be filled with every thing necessary for her to proceed the designed voyage, at the same time directing Mr. Limozin to call her and speak of her as his own,—after which you will instantly set off, for this place, to inform us of your proceedings. Meantime you are, on purchasing, to write, first post, not to us, but to *Mr. Le Grand, Banq: rue Mons Mart. vis-à-vis, St. Joseph à Paris*, only saying in a few words that you have made a purchase, and shall draw on him soon for the money favor of Mr. Limozin, or

words to that purpose. This letter will be shown us, and we shall regulate our proceedings accordingly.

Should you be obliged, on purchasing, to pay at Dover, or Deal, Mons. Le Grand's letter will give a sufficient credit for the purpose, and at Calais, or Boulogne, you will address yourself, on the score of advice and assistance in money matters, to the persons to whom you will have letters directed, but on no other account, and avoid hinting your proceedings or views to any one. But should Capt. Hynsen arrive from London and you, let him go in the vessel you purchase to Havre and there wait our further orders. Should he arrive and no vessel be purchased, in such case procure him a passage to Havre, and direct him to apply to Mr. Limozin for our directions. In the whole, we have to wish you to make the utmost despatch, and to conduct with the utmost secrecy and the economy consistent with hastening as fast as possible, the object in view.

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## DCXXXVIII

### SUPPOSED TO BE TO M. MONTAUDOIN

PARIS, 26 January, 1777.

SIR:—We are very much obliged to you for the information contained in yours of the 21st.

Mr. Williams'[1] good sense will prevent him from being materially embarrassed by any manœuvre employed to make him counteract our instructions.

[1] Mr. Jonathan Williams, Jr., who was about this time appointed commercial agent of Congress at the port of Nantes.

We cannot so entirely comprehend this obligation we have to the mayor and aldermen of your city, as to know in what terms to return it. As it is probable one of our number will soon be in Nantes, he will be able to thank them in person. In the meantime we beg the favor of you, sir, to make them our acknowledgments in such manner as you may think becoming. We have the honor to be, with very great esteem, sir, Your most obedient servants.

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## DCXXXIX

### TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PARIS, 26 January, 1777.

DEAR POLLY:—I wrote a few lines to you by Dr. B——, and have since seen your letter to Jonathan, by which I have the great pleasure of learning that you and yours were well on the 17th.

What has become of my and your dear Dolly? Have you parted? for you mention nothing of her. I know your friendship continues; but perhaps she is with one of her brothers. How do they all do?

I have not yet received a line from my dear old friend, your mother. Pray tell me where she is, and how it is with her. Jonathan, who is now at Nantes, told me that she had a lodging in Northumberland Court. I doubt her being comfortably accommodated there. Is Miss Barwell a little more at rest, or as busy as ever? Is she well? And how fares it with our good friends of the Henckell family?

But, principally, I want to know how it is with you. I hear you have not quite settled yet with those people. I hope, however, that you have a sufficient income, and live at your ease, and that your money is safe out of the funds. Does my godson remember any thing of his Doctor papa? I suppose not. Kiss the dear little fellow for me; not forgetting the others. I long to see them and you. What became of the lottery ticket I left with your good mother, which was to produce the diamond ear-rings for you? Did you get them? If not, Fortune has wronged you, for you *ought* to have had them. I am, my dear friend, ever yours with sincere esteem and affection,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—*January 27th.*—They tell me that in writing to a lady from Paris, one should always say something about the fashions. Temple observes them more than I do. He took notice that at the ball in Nantes there were no heads less than five, and a few were seven lengths of the face above the top of the forehead. You know that those who have practised drawing, as he has, attend more to proportions than people in common do. Yesterday we dined at the Duke de Rochefoucauld's, where there were three duchesses and a countess, and no head higher than a face and a half. So, it seems, the farther from court the more extravagant the mode.

## DCXL

### TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

PARIS, 27 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR:—I received your very kind letter of February last some time in September. Major Carleton, who was so kind as to forward it to me, had not an opportunity of doing it sooner. I rejoice to hear of your continual progress in those useful discoveries. I find that you have set all the philosophers of Europe at work upon *fixed air;* and it is with great pleasure I observe how high you stand in their opinion; for I enjoy my friends' fame as my own.

The hint you gave me jocularly, that you did not quite despair of the *philosopher's stone*, draws from me a request that, when you have found it, you will take care to lose it again; for I believe, in my conscience, that mankind are wicked enough to continue slaughtering one another as long as they can find money to pay the butchers. But of all the wars in my time, this on the part of England appears to me the wickedest, having no cause but malice against liberty, and the jealousy of commerce. And I think the crime seems likely to meet with its proper punishment—a total loss of her own liberty, and the destruction of her own commerce.

I suppose you would like to know something of the state of affairs in America. In all probability we shall be much stronger the next campaign than we were in the last; better armed, better disciplined, and with more ammunition. When I was at the

camp before Boston [1] the army had not five rounds of powder a man. This was kept a secret even from our people. The world wondered that we so seldom fired a cannon. We could not afford it; but we now make powder in plenty.

To me it seems, as it has always done, that this war must end in our favor and in the ruin of Britain, if she does not speedily put an end to it. An English gentleman here the other day, in company with some French, remarked that it was folly in France not to make war immediately. *And in England*, replied one of them, *not to make peace.*

Do not believe the reports you hear of our internal divisions. We are, I believe, as much united as any people ever were, and as firmly. B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXLI

### FROM WILLIAM DODD

LONDON, 29 January, 1777.

SIR:—I make no apology for troubling you with a request I have heretofore made of conveying the enclosed letter, if possible, to a worthy young woman, who, in an unfortunate hour, went to America, and to whose fortunes and situation there I am a stranger.

Anxious for the success of the grand struggle, in which you are engaged, I could have been happy in conversing with you when I was at Paris, but you were rather reserved. If you should see or converse with Mr. Mante, who resided at Dieppe, but

[1] In October, 1775.

is frequently at Paris, he knows my sentiments, and would be happy to communicate with you.[1] I am, with very great esteem, etc., W. Dodd.

P. S.—Is it not possible to effect a reconciliation? Happy could I be to be any way instrumental in it.

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## DCXLII

### TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ

Paris [date uncertain].

—— I long labored in England, with great zeal and sincerity, to prevent the breach that has happened, and which is now so wide that no endeavors of mine can possibly heal it. You know the treatment I met with from that imprudent court; but I keep a separate account of private injuries, which I may forgive; and I do not think it right to mix them

[1] Thomas Mante was the author of *The History of the Late War in North America, and the Islands of the West Indies, including the Campaigns of 1763 and 1764 against His Majesty's Indian Enemies;* being a quarto volume published at London in 1772. It is the best history of the war which has been written. The author served in America; and, in the campaign against the Indians, in 1764, he acted as major of a brigade and aid-de-camp to General Bradstreet. After he published his History, he engaged in extensive agricultural operations in France, where he fell into pecuniary difficulties, as he says, by the faithless conduct of a person with whom he was associated. He was imprisoned in Paris for debt. In this condition, debilitated by disease and oppressed with want, he applied to Dr. Franklin for assistance. His creditors kept him long confined, during which time Dr. Franklin extended to him every friendly aid in his power, and generously supplied his necessities.

It was but six days after writing the above letter, that Mr. Dodd signed the bond upon which he had forged the name of Lord Chesterfield, and which proved his ruin. He was convicted on the 24th of February, and executed in June following.—Sparks.

with public affairs. Indeed, there is no occasion for their aid to whet my resentment against a nation, that has burnt our defenceless towns in the midst of winter, has excited the savages to assassinate our innocent farmers, with their wives and children, and our slaves to murder their masters!

It would therefore be deceiving you, if I suffered you to remain in the supposition you have taken up, that I am come to Europe to make peace. I am in fact ordered hither by the Congress for a very different purpose; viz., to procure those aids from European powers, for enabling us to defend our freedom and independence, which it is certainly their interest to grant; as by that means the great and rapidly growing trade of America will be open to them all, and not a monopoly to Great Britain, as heretofore; a monopoly that, if she is suffered again to possess, will be such an increase of her strength by sea, and if she can reduce us again to submission, she will have thereby so great an addition to her strength by land, as will, together, make her the most formidable power the world has yet seen; and, from her natural pride and insolence in prosperity, of all others the most intolerable.

You desire to know my opinion of what will probably be the end of this war; and whether our new establishments will not be thereby reduced again to deserts. I do not, for my part, apprehend much danger of so great an evil to us. I think we shall be able, with a little help, to defend ourselves, our possessions, and our liberties so long, that England will be ruined by persisting in the wicked attempt to

destroy them. I must nevertheless regret that ruin, and wish that her injustice and tyranny had not deserved it. And I sometimes flatter myself that, old as I am, I may possibly live to see my country settled in peace and prosperity, when Britain shall make no more a formidable figure among the powers of Europe.

You put me in mind of an apology for my conduct, which has been expected from me, in answer to the abuses thrown upon me before the Privy Council. It was partly written, but the affairs of public importance I have ever since been engaged in prevented my finishing it.[1] The injuries, too, that my country has suffered, have absorbed private resentments, and made it appear trifling for an individual to trouble the world with his particular justification, when all his compatriots were stigmatized by the king and Parliament as being, in every respect, *the worst of mankind!* I am obliged to you, however, for the friendly part you have always taken in the defence of my character; and it is indeed no small argument in my favor, that those who have known me most and longest, still love me and trust me with their most important interests, of which my election into the Congress by the unanimous voice of the Assembly, or Parliament, of Pennsylvania, the day after my arrival from England, and my present mission hither by the Congress itself, are instances incontestable. ——

[1] See the piece here mentioned, in Vol. V. It was never published by Franklin, and first appeared in William Temple Franklin's edition of his grandfather's works in 1816-17.—EDITOR.

## DCXLIII

### TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD GEORGE SACKVILLE GERMAINE, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE TO THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN

PARIS, 7 February, 1777.

Whereas the schooner *Dickenson* with her cargo, which was the property of the Congress of the United States of America, was by an act of piracy in some of her crew carried into the port of Bristol in England, and there, as we are informed, was converted to the use of the government of Great Britain, and the perpetrators of so base and dishonest an action, the mate, etc., were rewarded instead of being punished for their wickedness,——and whereas another vessel with her cargo of tobacco, being also the property of the United States, or of some inhabitants of the same, was lately carried into the port of Liverpool, in England, by a similar act of treachery in her crew; and a third has in the same manner been carried into Halifax;

We therefore being commissioners plenipotentiary from the Congress of the United States of America, do, in their name and by their authority, demand from the court of Great Britain, a restitution of those vessels and their cargoes, or the full value of them; together with the delivery of the pirates into our hands, to be sent where they may be tried and punished as their crimes deserve.

We feel it our duty to humanity to warn the court of Great Britain of the consequences of protecting such offenders and of encouraging such actions as

are in violation of all moral obligation and therefore subversive of the firmest foundation of the laws of nations.

It is hoped that the government of Great Britain will not add to the unjust principles of this war, such practices as would disgrace the meanest state in Europe; and which must forever stain the character of the British nation.[1] We are sensible that nothing can be more abhorrent from the sentiments and feelings of the Congress of the United States, than the authorizing so base a kind of war as a retaliation of these practices will produce. We are, therefore, more earnest in pressing the court of Great Britain, to prevent, by the act of justice which is demanded, the retaliation, to which necessity, in repugnance to principles, will otherwise compel.

B. FRANKLIN,
SILAS DEANE,
ARTHUR LEE.

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## DCXLIV

### TO MRS. THOMPSON, AT LISLE

PARIS, 8 February, 1777.

You are too early, *hussy*, as well as too saucy, in calling me *rebel;* you should wait for the event, which will determine whether it is a *rebellion* or only a *revolution.* Here the ladies are more civil; they call us *les insurgens*, a character that usually pleases them; and methinks all other women who smart, or

[1] The Attorney-General, in the very year this letter was written, instituted criminal proceedings against an English clergyman for inviting subscriptions for the relief of wounded Americans.—EDITOR.

have smarted, under the tyranny of a bad husband, ought to be fixed in *revolution* principles, and act accordingly.

In my way to Canada last spring, I saw dear Mrs. Barrow at New York. Mr. Barrow had been from her two or three months, to keep Governor Tryon and other Tories company on board the *Asia*, one of the king's ships which lay in the harbor; and in all that time that naughty man had not ventured once on shore to see her. Our troops were then pouring into the town, and she was packing up to leave it, fearing, as she had a large house, they would incommode her by quartering officers in it. As she appeared in great perplexity, scarce knowing where to go, I persuaded her to stay; and I went to the general officers then commanding there, and recommended her to their protection; which they promised and performed. On my return from Canada, where I was a piece of governor (and I think a very good one) for a fortnight, and might have been so till this time if your wicked army, enemies to all good government, had not come and driven me out, I found her still in quiet possession of her house. I inquired how our people had behaved to her. She spoke in high terms of the respectful attention they had paid her, and the quiet and security they had procured her. I said I was glad of it; and that, if they had used her ill, I would have turned Tory. Then said she, with that pleasing gayety so natural to her, *I wish they had.* For you must know she is a *Toryess* as well as you, and can as flippantly call *rebel.* I drank tea with her; we talked affection-

ately of you and our other friends the Wilkses, of whom she had received no late intelligence. What became of her since, I have not heard. The street she lived in was some months after chiefly burnt down; but, as the town was then, and ever since has been, in possession of the king's troops, I have had no opportunity of knowing whether she suffered any loss in the conflagration. I hope she did not, as, if she did, I should wish I had not persuaded her to stay there.

I am glad to learn from you that that unhappy, though deserving family, the W——s, are getting into some business that may afford them subsistence. I pray that God will bless them, and that they may see happier days. Mr. Cheap's and Dr. H——'s good fortunes please me. Pray learn, if you have not already learnt, like me, to be pleased with other people's pleasures, and happy with their happiness, when none occur of your own; and then perhaps you will not so soon be weary of the place you chance to be in, and so fond of rambling to get rid of your *ennui*. I fancy you have hit upon the right reason of your being weary of St. Omer's, viz., that you are out of temper, which is the effect of full living and idleness. A month in Bridewell, beating hemp, upon bread and water, will give you health and spirits, and subsequent cheerfulness and contentment with every other situation. I prescribe that regimen for you, my dear, in pure good-will, without a fee. And let me tell you, if you do not get into temper, neither Brussels nor Lisle will suit you. I know nothing of the price of living in either of those places; but I am sure a

single woman, as you are, might with economy upon two hundred pounds a year maintain herself comfortably anywhere, and me into the bargain. Do not invite me in earnest, however, to come and live with you; for, being posted here, I ought not to comply, and I am not sure I should be able to refuse.

Present my respects to Mrs. Payne and Mrs. Heathcot; for, though I have not the honor of knowing them, yet, as you say they are friends to the American cause, I am sure they must be women of good understanding. I know you wish you could see me; but, as you cannot, I will describe myself to you. Figure me in your mind as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dressed, wearing my thin, gray straight hair, that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap, which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles. Think how this must appear among the powdered heads of Paris! I wish every lady and gentleman in France would only be so obliging as to follow my fashion, comb their own heads as I do mine, dismiss their *friseurs*, and pay me half the money they paid to them. You see, the gentry might well afford this, and I could then enlist these *friseurs*, who are at least one hundred thousand, and with the money I would maintain them, make a visit with them to England, and dress the heads of your ministers and privy councillors; which I conceive at present to be *un peu dérangées*. Adieu, madcap; and believe me ever your affectionate friend and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—Don't be proud of this long letter. A fit of the gout, which has confined me five days, and made me refuse to receive company, has given me a little time to trifle; otherwise it would have been very short, visitors and business would have interrupted; and perhaps, with Mrs. Barrow, you wish they had.

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## DCXLV

### TO GENERAL WASHINGTON [1]

SIR:—The Marquis de Lafayette, a young nobleman of great expectations and exceedingly beloved here, is by this time probably with you. By some misapprehension in his contract with the merchants of Bordeaux he was prevented from using the produce of the cargo he carried over, and so was left without a supply of money. His friends here have sent him over about £500 sterling; and have proposed sending him more; but on reflection, knowing the extreme generosity of his disposition, and fearing that some of his necessitous and artful countrymen may impose on his goodness, they wish to put his money into the hands of some discreet friend, who may supply him from time to time, and by that means knowing his expenses, may take occasion to advise him, if necessary, with a friendly affection, and secure him from too much imposition. They accordingly have desired us to name such a person

[1] This letter is printed from a rough draft, in the Department of State at Washington, which is without date.—EDITOR.

to them. We have not been able to think of one so capable, and so suitable from the influence of situation, to perform that kind office, as General Washington, under whose eye the gentleman will probably be. We beg therefore in his behalf, what his friends out of respect would not take the liberty of asking, that your Excellency would be pleased to furnish him with what money he may want in moderation, and take his drafts payable to us for the sums paid him, which we shall receive here and apply to the public service. We also join with his family in their earnest request that you would favor him with your counsels, which you may be assured will be an act of benevolence gratefully remembered and acknowledged, by a number of very worthy persons here who interest themselves extremely in the welfare of that amiable young nobleman.

With the greatest respect we have the honor to be, sir, Your Excellency's, etc.

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## DCXLVI

### FROM GEORGIANA SHIPLEY

LONDON, 11 February, 1777.

After near two years had passed without my hearing any thing from you, and while I looked upon the renewal of our correspondence as a very unlikely event, it is easier to conceive than express the joy I felt at receiving your last kind letter. The certainty that you are in good health and spirits, and

that you still remember your English friends, is the greatest pleasure we can know during your absence. How good you were to send me your direction, but I fear I must not make use of it as often as I could wish, since my father says that it will be prudent not to write in the present situation of affairs. I am not of an age to be so very prudent, and the only thought that occurred to me was your suspecting that my silence proceeded from other motives. I could not support the idea of your believing that I love and esteem you less than I did some few years ago. I therefore write this once without my father's knowledge. You are the first man that ever received a private letter from me, and in this instance I feel that my intentions justify my conduct; but I must entreat that you will take no notice of my writing, when next I have the happiness of hearing from you. You say you are interested in whatever relates to this family. My father I think was never better than he is at present, both as to his health and spirits; my mother has not been so well this last summer, but I flatter myself that she has now perfectly recovered from her late indisposition. Emily has only one daughter, a charming little girl, near fifteen months old, whom her aunts reckon a prodigy of sense and beauty. The rest of my sisters continue *in statu quo*. Whether this proceeds from the men being difficult, or from *their* being difficult, I leave you to determine. I often see many of your good friends, need I add that you are the favorite subject of our conversation. They all love you almost as much as I do—as much I will not admit to be pos-

sible. Doctor P. made me extremely happy last winter by giving me a print of my excellent friend. It is certainly very like you, although it wants the addition of your own hair to make it complete, but as it is, I prize it infinitely, now the dear original is absent. Pray have you met with Smith's "Wealth of Nations"? if not, I venture strongly to recommend it to you. I have read only part, but propose shortly to read it regularly through. His sentiments are liberal and the language clear and interesting. This is the only book that has been lately published worth mentioning, except Gibbon's "History of the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire." It is written in a pleasing elegant manner. His scheme is to unite ancient and modern history, an immense work, which I wish he may have application to accomplish. I have been at length fortunate enough to procure the Economics, which I have read with great attention, as indeed every thing else I can meet with relative to Socrates, for I fancy I can discover in each trait of that admirable man's character, a strong resemblance between him and my much-loved friend —the same clearness of judgment, the same uprightness of intention, and the same superior understanding. I dined lately with Sir Wm. Hamilton; he gave me an account of a new electrical machine, invented in Italy. It is composed of beeswax, a plate of metal, and a plate of glass. They are able to take a spark from it at ten inches' distance, but he could not inform me why these bodies united produce this effect. Were you in England how happy should I be to have this as well as many other

things explained by you, but I don't allow myself to entertain any hopes on this subject, as I much fear there is no reason to flatter myself with so pleasing an idea. *Envy* is reckoned one of the foibles of our sex. Till lately I thought I was exempt from it, but now I find a strong inclination to envy your grandson the having it in his power to show you any kindness and attention. Did my family know of my writing, my letter would scarce contain the very many things they would desire me to say for them. They continue to admire and love you as much as they did formerly, nor can any time or event in the least change their sentiments.

My paper now reminds me that it is high time for me to conclude. Assure yourself that every good wish for your happiness and prosperity attends you from this house. Adieu, mon cher *Socrate;* conservez vous pour l'amour de moi, et pour mille autres raisons plus importants. Je ne vous en dirai pas d'avantage pour aujourd' hui, mais je veux esperer de vous entretenir plus à mon aise, avant que soit longue. Pray write whenever a safe conveyance opens, since the receiving letters is reckoned very different from answering them. I must once more repeat nobody knows of this scroll; "a word to the wise,"—as poor Richard says.

## DCXLVII

### FROM THE COUNT DE SCHAUMBERGH TO THE BARON HOHENDORF, COMMANDING THE HESSIAN TROOPS IN AMERICA

ROME, 18 February, 1777.

MONSIEUR LE BARON: [1]—On my return from Naples, I received at Rome your letter of the 27th December of last year. I have learned with unspeakable pleasure the courage our troops exhibited at Trenton, and you cannot imagine my joy on being told that of the 1,950 Hessians engaged in the fight, but 345 escaped. There were just 1,605 men killed, and I cannot sufficiently commend your prudence in sending an exact list of the dead to my minister in London. This precaution was the more necessary, as the report sent to the English ministry does not give but 1,455 dead. This would make 483,450 florins instead of the 643,500 which I am entitled to demand under our convention. You will comprehend the prejudice which such an error would work in my finances, and I do not doubt you will take the necessary pains to prove that Lord North's list is false and yours correct.

The court of London objects that there were a hundred wounded who ought not to be included in the list, nor paid for as dead; but I trust you will

[1] The *jeu d'esprit* here given in the text appears in the *Correspondance, sécrète et inédite,, sur Louis XVI. et Marie Antoinette.* (See Vol. I., p. 60.) It may be the very satire referred to at the close of the letter on p. 217, this vol. Nor do I think I am doing Doctor Franklin any injustice in suspecting him of being its author. Since the death of Swift, who, besides Franklin, was sufficiently a master of this kind of satire to have written it?—EDITOR.

not overlook my instructions to you on quitting Cassel, and that you will not have tried by human succor to recall to life the unfortunates whose days could not be lengthened but by the loss of a leg or an arm. That would be making them a pernicious present, and I am sure they would rather die than live in a condition no longer fit for my service. I do not mean by this that you should assassinate them; we should be humane, my dear Baron, but you may insinuate to the surgeons with entire propriety that a crippled man is a reproach to their profession, and that there is no wiser course than to let every one of them die when he ceases to be fit to fight.

I am about to send you some new recruits. Don't economize them. Remember glory before all things. Glory is true wealth. There is nothing degrades the soldier like the love of money. He must care only for honor and reputation, but this reputation must be acquired in the midst of dangers. A battle gained without costing the conqueror any blood is an inglorious success, while the conquered cover themselves with glory by perishing with their arms in their hands. Do you remember that of the 300 Lacedæmonians who defended the defile of Thermopylæ, not one returned? How happy should I be could I say the same of my brave Hessians!

It is true that their king, Leonidas, perished with them: but things have changed, and it is no longer the custom for princes of the empire to go and fight in America for a cause with which they have no concern. And besides, to whom should they pay

the thirty guineas per man [1] if I did not stay in Europe to receive them? Then, it is necessary also that I be ready to send recruits to replace the men you lose. For this purpose I must return to Hesse. It is true, grown men are becoming scarce there, but I will send you boys. Besides, the scarcer the

[1] The editor of *George III.'s Letters to Lord North*, in a brief commentary upon these contracts, Vol. I., p. 266, says:

"The principal *grasiers* with whom the English government dealt for military stock were the Duke of Brunswick, the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the hereditary Prince of Hesse Cassel, and subsequently the Prince of Waldeck. The prices given, as appears from the copies of the treaties laid before Parliament on the 29th of February in the following year, were as follows: These potentates stipulated to supply a force of 17,742 men at the rate of 7*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.* a man; all extraordinary losses in battle or otherwise to be compensated by the king. Each of the noble graziers was to receive in addition an annual subsidy in proportion to the number of men; the Duke of Brunswick 15,510*l.* so long as his troops received pay, and double that sum for two years after; the Landgrave of Hesse 108,281*l.*, and also to have twelve months' notice before payment was discontinued, after his forces returned to his dominions; to the Princes of Hesse and Waldeck, who contributed near 700 men each, were assigned 6,017*l.* The dominions of all were guaranteed against foreign attack, for such time at least as their herds were in foreign parts."

In a letter from George III. to Lord North, dated from Kew, November 14, 1775, his Majesty writes:

"I sent last week orders to the Regency and to Field Marshal Sporken that Schleither should be permitted to contract with Colonel Faucitt for raising 4,000 recruits for Great Britain, and that Stade and Neuburgh should be the two garrisons where the recruits should be closely kept. . . . The laws of Germany are so clear against emigration that I certainly, in going thus far, have done as much as I possibly can in my electoral capacity; the giving commissions to officers, or any other of the proposals that have been made, I can by no means consent to, for they, in plain English, are turning me into a kidnapper, which I cannot think a very honorable occupation."

The Colonel Faucitt here referred to was sent as agent to trade with the hereditary prince Ferdinand, George III.'s brother-in-law, who persuaded his father, the reigning duke, to part with some of his troops. Three hundred light dragoons, which were not wanted, were added to "the 4,000 recruits" required, Faucitt not wishing "to appear difficult."

commodity, the higher the price. I am assured that the women and little girls have begun to till our lands, and they get on not badly. You did right to send back to Europe that Dr. Crumerus who was so successful in curing dysentery. Don't bother with a man who is subject to looseness of the bowels. That disease makes bad soldiers. One coward will do more mischief in an engagement than ten brave men will do good. Better that they burst in their barracks than fly in a battle, and tarnish the glory of our arms. Besides, you know that they

Sixty German dollars levy money was demanded for each man, but a little more than half that sum was finally accepted. Every soldier killed was to be paid for at the rate of the levy money, and three wounded men were to be reckoned as one killed.

It must have been the recital of these degrading enormities which inspired the following anecdote at the expense of royalty, preserved by John Adams. He says in his diary:

"Franklin told us one of his characteristic stories. A Spanish writer of certain visions of hell relates that a certain devil, who was civil, showed him all the apartments of the place; among others, that of the deceased kings. The Spaniard was much pleased at so illustrious a sight, and, after viewing them for some time, said he should be glad to see the rest of them. 'The rest!' said the demon; 'here are all the kings that have ever reigned upon earth, from the creation of it to this day. What the devil would the man have?'"

It is worthy of note here that the castle of Wilhelmshöhe, one of the most costly country-places, after that of the palace of Versailles, in the world, was built by the Elector of Cassel shortly after our revolutionary war, with the money he received for the loan of his subjects to aid England in resisting the emancipation of her American colonies. This palace, and the bridges, water-falls, towers, etc., are said to have employed 2,000 men fourteen years in their construction, and the cost was found to be so enormous that the accounts were destroyed. For the 12,000 Hessians sent to fight the Americans and 5,000 more sent to resist the invasion of Scotland by the Pretender, England paid the Elector of that day 22,000,000 thalers, or about $18,000,000, of which the palace of Wilhelmshöhe is the most conspicuous surviving memorial.

It is a fact pregnant with important lessons, that every one of the

pay me as killed for all who die from disease, and I don't get a farthing for runaways. My trip to Italy, which has cost me enormously, makes it desirable that there should be a great mortality among them. You will therefore promise promotion to all who expose themselves; you will exhort them to seek glory in the midst of dangers; you will say to Major Maundorff that I am not at all content with his saving the 345 men who escaped the massacre at Trenton. Through the whole campaign he has not had ten men killed in consequence of his orders. Finally, let it be your principal object to prolong the war and avoid a decisive engagement on either side, for I have made arrangements for a grand Italian opera,

European states, including Cassel, that hired out their subjects to resist American independence, have lost their own. Not one of them is any longer a sovereign power. In the war of 1866, the last Elector of Cassel committed the folly of taking sides with Austria, and one of the consequences was that his enchanting castle of Wilhelmshöhe became the property of his conqueror. Thus one after the other all the states that made merchandise of their subjects to aid England in keeping her American colonies in thrall have been swallowed up by Prussia, our earliest European friend, with whom we never had even a diplomatic controversy, and whose wealth and sympathy contributed in no inconsiderable degree to sustain the United States during their recent and greatest national trials.

This palace of Wilhelmshöhe was destined subsequently to become at once the prison and the asylum of another sovereign, who, unfaithful to the traditions of his people, allowed himself to countenance a conspiracy which, to be successful, must have involved the destruction of the republic which had proved so fatal to those of his order who had tried to strangle it in its cradle. With Louis Napoleon's project to re-establish imperial institutions upon the ruins of a republic in Mexico, began the decline of his fortunes. It is a curious vindication of the ways of God to man that this castle of Wilhelmshöhe, built with the bones of America's enemies, should be destined to afford the welcome shelter of a prison to one who lost his crown in attempting to erect armed barriers against the spread of the Anglo-Saxon race in America.—EDITOR.

and I do not wish to be obliged to give it up. Meantime I pray God, my dear Baron de Hohendorf, to have you in his holy and gracious keeping.

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## DCXLVIII

### TO RICHARD PETERS [1]

DEAR SIR:—The bearer, Mr. Garanger, Captain of Bombardiers, had, as he informs me, engaged to go to America with M. De Coudray, an officer of great distinction in the artillery, who is engaged in our service, and sailed some time since. M. Garanger not being then ready was left behind. He is well recommended to me by M. Brisson, a gentleman of science here, and has other certificates of his abilities to show; besides that, the judgment of M. de Coudray, in choosing to engage him, is of itself more than a sufficient recommendation. I know nothing of the contract between them, and must for that refer to M. de Coudray himself, who I hope is by this time safely arrived. I only beg leave to introduce him to you, to recommend him to your civilities and countenance, as a gentleman who is zealous for our cause and desirous to serve it, and to request you will present him to the Board of War. I congratulate you on the check given to the enemy in New Jersey, and wishing continued success to our arms,

[1] This letter was filed with the following memorandum: "Copy of a letter from Benjamin Franklin, Esqr., to Mr. Richard Peters, Secretary to the Rebel Board of War at Philadelphia, dated at Paris March 6, 1777."

and to you and Mrs. Peters health and happiness, I have the honor to be, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCXLIX

### TO ARTHUR LEE [1]

PASSY, 21 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR:—We have received your favors from Vittoria and Burgos. The Congress, sitting at Baltimore, despatched a packet to us the 9th of January, containing an account of the success at Trenton, and subsequent events to that date, as far as they had come to knowledge. The vessel was obliged to run up a little river in Virginia to avoid some men-of-war, and was detained there seventeen days, or we

[1] In a letter from the Commissioners to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, dated at Paris, February 6th, they write as follows: "Finding that our residence here together is nearly as expensive as if separate, and *having reason to believe* that one of us might be useful in Madrid, and another in Holland, and some courts farther northward, we have agreed that Mr. Lee go to Spain, and either Mr. Deane or Dr. Franklin to the Hague. Mr. Lee sets out to-morrow, having obtained passports, and a letter from the Spanish ambassador here to the minister there. The journey to Holland will not take place so soon. The particular purposes of these journeys we cannot prudently now explain."

Mr. Lee accordingly went to Spain, but he was not permitted by the Spanish court to proceed any farther than Burgos. He was there met by the Marquis de Grimaldi, one of the ministers, and succeeded in obtaining from the Spanish government a small amount of money for purchasing military supplies, which were subsequently shipped to the United States from Bilboa. The business was transacted secretly, and the minister declined making any pledges or entering into any arrangements in favor of the United States. Mr. Lee returned to Paris, and rejoined the other Commissioners, after an absence of seven weeks.—See *North American Review* for April, 1830, Vol. XXX., p. 470.—EDITOR.

should have had these advices sooner. We learn, however, through England, where they have news from New York to the 4th of February, that in Lord Cornwallis' retreat to New Brunswick two regiments of his rear guard were cut to pieces; that General Washington, having got round him to Newark and Elizabethtown, he had retired to Amboy in his way to New York; that General Howe had called in the garrisons of Fort Lee and Fort Constitution, which were now possessed by our people; that on the New York side Forts Washington and Independence were retaken by our troops, and that the British forces at Rhode Island were recalled for the defence of New York.

The committee in their letters mention the intention of Congress to send ministers to the courts of Vienna, Tuscany, Holland, and Prussia. They also send us a fresh commission, containing your name instead of Mr. Jefferson's, with this additional clause: "And also to enter into and agree upon a treaty with his most Christian Majesty, or such other person or persons as shall be by him authorized for that purpose, for assistance in carrying on the present war between Great Britain and these United States." The same clause is in a particular commission they have sent me, to treat with the court of Spain, similar to our common commission to the court of France,[1] and I am accordingly directed to go to

[1] On the 1st of January, 1777, Congress resolved: "That Benjamin Franklin be directed to proceed to the court of Spain, and there transact, in behalf of the United States, such business as shall be intrusted to him by Congress, agreeably to the instructions that may be given to him and transmitted by the Committee of Secret Correspondence." See his commission in the *Secret Journal of Congress*, Vol. II., p. 42.—EDITOR.

Spain; but, as I know that choice was made merely on the supposition of my being a little known there to the great personage for whom you have my letter (a circumstance of little importance), and I am really unable through age to bear the fatigue and inconveniences of such a journey, I must excuse myself to Congress, and join with Mr. Deane in requesting you to proceed in the business on the former footing till you can receive a particular commission from Congress, which will no doubt be sent as soon as the circumstances are known.

We know of no plans or instructions to Mr. Deane but those you have with you. By the packet, indeed, we have some fresh instructions, which relate to your mission, viz., that, in case France and Spain will enter into the war, the United States will assist the former in the conquest of the British sugar islands, and the latter in the conquest of Portugal, promising the assistance of six frigates manned, of not less than twenty-four guns each, and provisions equal to two millions of dollars; America desiring only for her share what Britain holds on the continent; but you shall by the first safe opportunity have the instructions at length. I believe we must send a courier.

If we can, we are ordered to borrow two millions of pounds on interest. Judge then what a piece of service you will do, if you can obtain a considerable subsidy, or even a loan without interest.

We are also ordered to build six ships of war. It is a pleasure to find the things ordered, which we were doing without orders.

We are also to acquaint the several courts with

the determination of America to maintain at all events our independence. You will see, by the date of the resolution relating to Portugal, as well as by the above, that the Congress were stout in the midst of their difficulties. It would be well to sound the court of Spain on the subject of permitting our armed ships to bring prizes into her ports, and there dispose of them. If it can be done openly, in what manner can we be accommodated with the use of their ports, or under what restrictions? This government has of late been a little nice on that head; and the orders to L'Orient have occasioned Captain Wickes some trouble.

We have good advice of our friend at Amsterdam, that in the height of British pride on their summer success, and just before they heard of any check, the ambassador, Sir Joseph Yorke, had been ordered to send a haughty memorial to the States, importing that, notwithstanding their promises to restrain their subjects from supplying the rebels, it was notorious, that those supplies were openly furnished by Hollanders at St. Eustatia; and that the governor of that island had returned, *from his fort, the salute of a rebel ship of war with an equal number of guns;* that his Majesty justly and highly resented these proceedings, and demanded that the States should by more severe provisions restrain that commerce; that they should declare their disapprobation of the insolent behavior of their governor, and punish him by an immediate recall; otherwise his Majesty, who knows what appertains to the dignity of his crown, would take proper measures to vindicate it; and he

required an immediate answer. The States coolly returned the memorial, with only this answer—that, when the respect due to sovereigns was not preserved in a memorial, it ought not to be expected in an answer. But the city of Amsterdam took fire at the insolence of it, and instructed their deputies in the States to demand satisfaction by the British court's disavowal of the memorial, and the reprimand of the ambassador. The States immediately demanded a number of men-of-war ships to be in readiness. Perhaps since the bad news has come, England may be civil enough to make up this little difference.

Mr. Deane is still here. You desire our advice about your stopping at Burgos. We are of opinion that you should comply with the request. While we are asking aid it is necessary to gratify the desires, and in some sort comply with the humors, of those we apply to. Our business now is to carry our point. But I have never yet changed the opinion I gave in Congress, that a virgin State should preserve the virgin character, and not go about suitoring for alliances, but wait with decent dignity for the applications of others. I was overruled; perhaps for the best.

With the greatest esteem, I am ever, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.[1]

[1] Upon Franklin's arrival in Paris he was conducted by Mr. Deane to Hôtel Hamburg, his own residence, in the Rue de l'Université, where he tarried a few weeks. It proved too public a place for a lion of such proportions as by this time the Doctor had attained, and he was but too happy to accept the invitation of M. Le Ray de Chaumont, a warm, steadfast, and most useful friend of the Americans, to accept a house,

## DCL

### TO M. LITH

PASSY, 6 April, 1777.

SIR:—I have just been honored with a letter from you, dated the 26th past, in which you express yourself as astonished, and appear to be angry, that you have no answer to a letter you wrote me on the 11th of December, which you are sure was delivered to me.

or *dependance*, as the French call it, of his country place, the Hôtel Valentinois, at Passy, then about three miles from Paris, but included within the city limits during the Second Empire. It was from there this letter was written. Besides its greater seclusion, the relations which M. de Chaumont held with the court and ministry gave to this residence advantages which did not escape the sagacious eye of the American envoy. As Dr. Franklin continued to occupy this house for the entire nine years of his sojourn in France, and to entertain with M. de Chaumont and his descendants relations of cordial friendship and intimacy till the end of his life, I will here insert a letter from the grandson of Dr. Franklin's host, written to the Editor in 1863, giving details of M. Le Ray de Chaumont, of his rank and influence, and of his devotion to the American cause, which are not generally known:

"Before I have the honor of seeing again your Excellency, I beg leave to say a few words of my family, which may not be wholly uninteresting to you, and which are important to me.

"At the time when Franklin and the other Commissioners came to France, my grandfather, Grandmaître des Eaux et Forêts de France, Intendant honoraire des Invalides, was enjoying a well-earned repose and a fortune of two millions of francs, at his Château of Chaumont on the Loire, and at Passy, near Paris.

"The Duc de Choiseul, his friend and neighbor in the country, had wished him to enter the ministry with him; but my grandfather refused in order to be an intermediary between the Government and the Commissioners. He received them in a house in his Parc at Passy, whence many letters from Franklin are dated.

"I take the liberty of referring your Excellency to the copy of a letter from B. Franklin to President Washington, here enclosed.*

"At one time he sent clothing to General Lafayette's army, and, as

* See this letter, dated June 3, 1789, in its place. Also the letter of Franklin to the President of Congress, dated April 12, 1785.—EDITOR.

In exculpation of myself, I assure you that I never received any letter from you of that date. And indeed, being then but four days landed at Nantes, I think you could scarce have heard so soon of my being in Europe.

But I received one from you of the 8th of January, which I own I did not answer. It may displease you if I give you the reason; but, as it may be of use to you in your future correspondences, I will hazard that for a gentleman to whom I feel myself obliged, as an American, on account of his good-will to our cause.

Whoever writes to a stranger should observe three points. 1. That what he proposes be practicable. 2. His propositions should be made in explicit terms, so as to be easily understood. 3. What he desires should be in itself reasonable. Hereby he will give a favorable impression of his understanding, and

friend of the General's wife's family, he had constant and friendly intercourse with the General.

"When Paul Jones came to France, the confidence of the Governments of the United States and France entrusted my grandfather with the difficult task of superintending the fitting out of the expedition. This was rendered more delicate by P. Jones's irascible and capricious temper. In fact, this brave but imprudent man behaved improperly with regard to my grandfather, but afterwards apologized.

"During my father's protracted stay in America, he married a Miss Coxe of New Jersey; he entered largely, in connection with Gouverneur Morris and Count de La Forest, Consul-General of France (with both of whom he maintained through life a warm and intimate friendship), in purchases of wild lands in the State of New York. This necessitated several journeys, and finally his settling in America.

"My father was naturalized an American citizen. I have the honor of bearing the same title, although born in France; and my son, whose mother was an American (of the Livingston family), was born in New York."

In 1867 the writer of this letter was still living, and taking a lively interest in the fortunes of the republic which his father and grandfather had helped to nurse in its infancy.—EDITOR.

create a desire of further acquaintance. Now it happened that you were negligent in *all* these points: for, first, you desired to have means procured for you of taking a voyage to America "*avec sureté*," which is not possible, as the dangers of the sea subsist always, and at present there is the additional danger of being taken by the English. Then you desire that this may be "*sans trop grandes dépenses*," which is not intelligible enough to be answered, because, not knowing your ability of bearing expenses, one cannot judge what may be *trop grandes*. Lastly, you desire letters of address to the Congress and to General Washington; which it is not reasonable to ask of one who knows no more of you, than that your name is Lith, and that you live at Bayreuth.

In your last you also express yourself in vague terms, when you desire to be informed whether you may expect "*d'être reçu d'une manière convenable*" in our troops. As it is impossible to know what your ideas are of the *manière convenable*, how can one answer this? And then you demand whether I will support you by my authority in giving you letters of recommendation. I doubt not your being a man of merit; and, knowing it yourself, you may forget that it is not known to everybody; but reflect a moment, sir, and you will be convinced that, if I were to practise giving letters of recommendation to persons of whose character I knew no more than I do of yours, my recommendations would soon be of no authority at all.

I thank you, however, for your kind desire of being serviceable to my countrymen; and I wish, in return,

that I could be of service to you in the scheme you have formed of going to America. But numbers of experienced officers here have offered to go over and join our army, and I could give them no encouragement, because I have no orders for that purpose, and I know it is extremely difficult to place them when they arrive there. I cannot but think, therefore, that it is best for you not to make so long, so expensive, and so hazardous a voyage, but to take the advice of your friends, and "*stay in Franconia.*" I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLI

### TO COUNT D'ARANDA, SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO THE COURT OF FRANCE

PASSY, 7 April, 1777.

SIR:—I left in your Excellency's hands, to be communicated, if you please, to your court, a duplicate of the commission from Congress, appointing me to go to Spain as their Minister Plenipotentiary. But, as I understand that the receiving such a minister is not at present thought convenient, and I am sure the Congress would have nothing done that might incommode in the least a court they so much respect, I shall therefore postpone that journey till circumstances may make it more suitable. In the meantime I beg leave to lay before his Catholic Majesty, through the hands of your Excellency, the proposi-

tions contained in a resolution of Congress, dated December 30, 1776, viz.:

"That, if his Catholic Majesty will join with the United States in a war against Great Britain, they will assist in reducing to the possession of Spain the town and harbor of Pensacola; provided the inhabitants of the United States shall have the free navigation of the Mississippi, and the use of the harbor of Pensacola; and will (provided it shall be true, that his Portuguese Majesty has insultingly expelled the vessels of these States from his ports, or has confiscated any such vessels) declare war against the said king, if that measure shall be agreeable to, and supported by, the courts of France and Spain."

It is understood that the strictest union subsists between those two courts; and in case Spain and France should think fit to attempt the conquest of the English sugar islands, Congress have further proposed to furnish provisions to the amount of two millions of dollars, and to join the fleet employed on the occasion with six frigates of not less than twenty-four guns each, manned and fitted for service; and to render any other assistance which may be in their power, as becomes good allies, without desiring for themselves the possession of any of the said islands.

These propositions are subject to discussion, and to receive such modification as may be found proper. With great respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCLII

### TO MR. RYBOT

PASSY, 9 April, 1777.

SIR:—I believe it is very unusual for one man to pay another's debts without being desired so to do by the debtor, or knowing that he acknowledges the sum demanded to be due. Mr. Hood is as much a stranger to me as he is to you. You have lent him three guineas; I have lent him thirty, supposing him an honest man. By the account you give me of his treatment of you, and which I do not doubt, he appears to be otherwise; and from the falsehoods he told you and wrote to you, there is reason to question the truth of what he has said of his estate and ability to pay. These are certainly no inducements to me to advance more on his account. The letters he brought for me were of small consequence, and the packets contained only newspapers. The benefit therefrom which you suppose I received by your helping him on to Paris, is vastly less than the damage I shall suffer by his coming thither, if I am not repaid; and I imagine that if a man entrusted with carrying letters to you should obtain a credit by showing them, you would hardly think yourself obliged to pay his debts. In the memorandum you left with me you have not given your address in London. Send me that, if you please.

I shall take the same care and pains to recover your money as my own, and when recovered shall faithfully remit it to you. This seems to me all that

you can fairly desire of, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLIII

### TO RICHARD BACHE, ESQ.

PASSY NEAR PARIS, 14 April, 1777.

DEAR SON:—The bearer, Mr. Guez, being well recommended to me as a skilful surgeon, and otherwise of good character for his morals and prudence, I recommend him to your civilities and advice, which as a stranger he may have occasion for; and as he has not sufficient to pay his passage here, and will not be able to provide such a sum immediately there, I desire you to advance it for him out of my money left in your hands, and take his bond for repayment in a year. I request likewise that you will endeavor to introduce him to some employment either in the army or navy; or if those are full, into some town or place where one of his profession may be wanted. Ben and Temple continue well, with your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLIV

### TO THE BISHOP OF TRICOMIE

PASSY, 22 April, 1777.

REVEREND SIR:—Mr. Mercley, whom your Reverence mentions as having made promises to Mon-

sieur, your brother, was employed as a merchant to purchase some military stores for the Congress, but I know of no authority that he had to engage officers of the marine, or to make any promises to such in our behalf. I have not myself (as I have already had the honor of telling your Reverence) the least authority from the Congress to make promises to officers to encourage their going to America; and since my arrival in France I have constantly dissuaded all who have applied to me, from undertaking the voyage, as I know how difficult it would be for them to find employment, a few engineers and officers of the artillery excepted, who are gone. Nevertheless if your brother continues resolved to go thither at his own expense and risk of finding or not finding employment, which I cannot advise him to do, I will give him letters of introduction to gentlemen there, recommending him to their civilities; but I must at the same time caution him against having any reliance on those letters as a means of procuring him a command in our armies, since I am by no means sure they will have any such effect. I will, if you please, give him a letter to General Washington; but then I should have the state of his services to enclose; and if accompanied with recommendations from some general officers of note, it will be so much the better.

My door is never shut to your Reverence when I am at home, as I am almost every evening.

With great respect I have the honor to be, your Reverence's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCLV

### TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VISCOUNT DE PONTE DE LIMA, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE KINGDOM OF PORTUGAL

PARIS, 26 April, 1777.

SIR:—The Congress of the United States of America have seen with concern in the public newspapers an edict of the late King of Portugal, dated at the Palace of Ajuda the 4th of July, 1776, wherein the States are spoken of in terms of contumely, and all ships belonging to their people then in the ports of Portugal are ordered to quit the same in eight days; and that for the future in all the ports of the Portuguese dominions *no shelter* shall be given to any vessels laden or in ballast coming from any of the ports of the said States; but on the contrary they are to be repelled from the said ports, and in the condition they entered, without giving them *the least succor of any kind whatsoever.*

As a long friendship and commerce has subsisted between the Portuguese and the inhabitants of North America, whereby Portugal has been supplied with the most necessary commodities in exchange for her superfluities, and not the least injury has ever been committed or even attempted or imagined by America to that kingdom, the United States cannot but be astonished to find not only their commerce rejected, but their navigators who may need a port when in distress refused the common rights of humanity, a conduct towards the said States not only unprecedented, but which we are confident will not

be followed by any other power in Europe; all the rest having considered our difference with and separation from England as a matter of which they were not constituted judges, and therefore have not undertaken to condemn either party, without hearing or enquiry, but allow our ships of all kinds the same freedom of their ports as is allowed to those belonging to England and the same privileges of commerce. We, therefore, being Ministers of the Congress of the said United States, have been charged by them to represent to your court their sincere desire to live in peace with all mankind, and particularly with your nation, which they have ever esteemed and respected; and that they hope your government in its wisdom will reconsider and revoke the said edict, and permit the continuance of the said friendly and commercial intercourse between your people and theirs, which has ever been so advantageous to both. This representation we accordingly hereby make; and as an early step to growing misunderstandings may have beneficial consequences to all concerned, we cannot but hope for a favorable and speedy answer.

With great regard, we have the honor to be, etc.

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## DCLVI

### TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE AMBASSADOR FROM PORTUGAL

PARIS, 26 April, 1777.

SIR:—The Congress of the United States of America have seen a paper purporting to be an edict of

His Portuguese Majesty, dated at the Palace of Ajuda the 4th of July, 1776, in which the said States are treated with contumely, their ships however distressed, forbidden to enter any port in his dominions, and his subjects everywhere forbidden to afford them the least shelter or relief. But as this instrument has not been communicated to the Congress with any circumstance of authenticity, and appears only in gazettes which frequently contain fictitious pieces not to be relied on; as a long friendship and commerce has subsisted between the Portuguese and the inhabitants of North America, whereby Portugal has been supplied with the most necessary commodities in exchange for her superfluities, and not the least injury has ever been committed or even offered by America to that kingdom, the United States can scarcely bring themselves to believe that the said edict is genuine, and that Portugal, which, but little more than a century since, was with respect to its former government in a situation similar to theirs, should be the first to reproach them with it as a crime that rendered them unworthy of the common rights of humanity, and should be the only power in Europe that has rejected their commerce and assumed to judge of their cause, and condemn them without authority, hearing, or enquiry. We, therefore, being Ministers of the Congress of the said United States, have been charged by them to represent to his most faithful Majesty their sincere desire to live in peace with all mankind, and particularly with his nation; that if he has been by their enemies surprised into the issuing such an edict, he would be

pleased in his wisdom to reconsider and revoke it; and that he would henceforth permit the continuance of the said friendly and commercial intercourse between his people and theirs, which has ever been so advantageous to both. This representation we now take the liberty of making to your court through the medium of your Excellency; and whatever might have been its reception if it had been made before the late change, we do not now allow ourselves to doubt of its having in due time a favorable answer, being persuaded from the equitable character of the present government that the measure in question cannot be approved of, and such unworthy treatment continued towards an inoffensive and friendly people.

With great respect, we have the honor to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servants,

B. FRANKLIN,
SILAS DEANE,
ARTHUR LEE,
*Commissioners Plenipotentiary for the United States of North America.*

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## DCLVII

### TO THOMAS CUSHING

PARIS, 1 May, 1777.

SIR:—I thank you for your kind congratulations on my arrival here, and shall be happy in finding

that our negotiations on this side of the water are of effectual service to our country.

The general news here is that all Europe is arming and preparing for war, as if it were soon expected. Many of the powers, however, have their reasons for endeavoring to postpone it, at least a few months longer.

Our enemies will not be able to send against us all the strength they intended; they can procure but few Germans; and their recruiting and impressing at home goes on but heavily. They threaten, however, and give out that Lord Howe is to bombard Boston this summer, and Burgoyne, with the troops from Canada, to destroy Providence and lay waste Connecticut, while Howe marches against Philadelphia. They will do us undoubtedly as much mischief as they can; but the virtue and bravery of our countrymen will, with the blessing of God, prevent part of what they intend, and nobly bear the rest. This campaign is entered upon with a mixture of rage and despair, as their whole scheme of reducing us depends upon its success; the wisest of the nation being clear that, if this fails, administration will not be able to support another.

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLVIII

### TO SAMUEL COOPER

PARIS, 1 May, 1777.

I thank you for your kind congratulations on my safe arrival here, and for your good wishes. I am, as

you supposed, treated with great civility and respect by all orders of people; but it gives me still greater satisfaction to find that our being here is of some use to our country. On that head I cannot be more explicit at present.

I rejoice with you in the happy change of affairs in America last winter. I hope the same train of success will continue through the summer. Our enemies are disappointed in the number of additional troops they purposed to send over. What they have been able to muster will not probably recruit their army to the state it was in the beginning of last campaign; and ours, I hope, will be equally numerous, better armed, and better clothed than they have been heretofore.

All Europe is on our side of the question, as far as applause and good wishes can carry them. Those who live under arbitrary power do nevertheless approve of liberty, and wish for it; they almost despair of recovering it in Europe; they read the translations of our separate colony constitutions with rapture; and there are such numbers everywhere, who talk of removing to America, with their families and fortunes, as soon as peace and our independence shall be established, that it is generally believed we shall have a prodigious addition of strength, wealth, and arts, from the emigration of Europe; and it is thought that to lessen or prevent such emigrations, the tyrannies established there must relax, and allow more liberty to their people. Hence it is a common observation here that our cause is *the cause of all mankind*, and that we are fighting for their liberty

in defending our own. It is a glorious task assigned us by Providence, which has, I trust, given us spirit and virtue equal to it, and will at last crown it with success. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLIX

### TO JOHN WINTHROP

PARIS, 1 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR:—I received your kind letter of February 28th, which gave me great pleasure. I forwarded your letter to Dr. Price, who was well lately; but his friends, on his account, were under some apprehensions from the violence of government, in consequence of his late excellent publications in favor of liberty. I wish all the friends of liberty and of man would quit that sink of corruption and leave it to its fate.

The people of this country are almost unanimously in our favor. The government has its reasons for postponing a war, but is making daily the most diligent preparations, wherein Spain goes hand in hand. In the meantime America has the whole harvest of prizes made upon the British commerce, a kind of monopoly that has its advantages, as, by affording greater encouragement to our cruisers, it increases the number of our seamen, and thereby augments our naval power.

The conduct of those princes of Germany who

have sold the blood of their people has subjected them to the contempt and odium of all Europe. The Prince of Anspach, whose recruits mutinied and refused to march, was obliged to disarm and fetter them, and drive them to the seaside by the help of his guards, himself attending in person. In his return he was publicly hooted by mobs through every town he passed in Holland, with all sorts of reproachful epithets. The King of Prussia's humor of obliging those princes to pay him the same toll per head for the men they drive through his dominions, as used to be paid him for their *cattle*, because they were sold as such, is generally spoken of with approbation, as containing a just reproof to those tyrants. I send you enclosed one of the many satires that have appeared on this occasion.[1]

[1] This practical joke of Frederick's was fully warranted by the nature of the traffic in which his fellow-sovereigns were embarked. George III., in one of his letters to Lord North, dated from Kew, August 20, 1775, said:

"As to the proposals transmitted by Mr. Romer, they all end in corps of officers, which cannot be done but by act of Parliament; the only idea these Germans ought to *addopt* (sic) *is the being contractors* for raising recruits and fixing the price they *will deliver them* at Hamburg, Rotterdam, and any other port they may propose."

This is very much in the style of a cattle-trader.

Schiller, in his *Kabale und Liebe*, Act II., Scene 2, glances at the ill repute in which this white slave-trading was held in Germany; and in a letter from Frederick to Voltaire we have his opinion again:

"Je vous remercie du 'Catéchism, des Souverains,' production que je n'attendais pas de M. le Landgrave de Hesse. Vous me faites trop d'honneur de m'attribuer son éducation. S'il était sorti de mon école, il ne se serait point fait Catholique, et il n'aurait pas vendu ses sujets aux Anglais comme on vend le bétail pour l'égorger."—*Œuvres posth. de Frédéric* tom. I., p. 325.

The sympathies of Frederick in these days were all with the French and Americans as against England. The writer of the *Correspon-*

With best wishes of prosperity to yourself and to my dear country, where I hope to spend my last years, and lay my bones, I am ever, dear sir, your affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLX

### TO A FRIEND

PASSY [date uncertain].

You know, my dear friend, that I am not capable of refusing you any thing in my power, which would be a real kindness to you, or any friend of yours; but, when I am certain that what you request would be directly the contrary, I ought to refuse it. I know that officers going to America for employment will probably be disappointed; that our armies are full; that there are a number of expectants unemployed,

*dance, secrète et inédite, sur Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette*, etc., says, under date of November 3, 1777, Vol. I., p. 108:

"In a letter which the King of Prussia has written to one of his literary correspondents in Paris, this passage occurs: 'I send you my secret against hydrophobia; it is certain that it has failed in none of the trials I have given it here. It should be administered to the British Parliament, which acts like an infuriated fool in the American business. It is now about to embroil itself again with Russia. I have the abiding hope that you will don your cuirass against this *God dem;* that you will aid the colonies to become free, and retake Canada, which they so wrongfully took from you. It is the wish of my heart, and it should be also the dictate of policy."

The same authority cites another letter from the same source to D'Alembert, just two weeks later, in which the king says: "I like these brave fellows, and cannot help secretly hoping for their success. It must be admitted that you are very pacific."

In less than three months from this time the alliance between the colonies and France was signed.

and starving for want of subsistence; that my recommendation will not make vacancies, nor can it fill them, to the prejudice of those who have a better claim; that some of those officers I have been prevailed on to recommend have, by their conduct, given no favorable impression of my judgment in military merit; and then the voyage is long, the passage very expensive, and the hazard of being taken and imprisoned by the English very considerable. If, after all, no place can be found affording a livelihood for the gentleman in question, he will perhaps be distressed in a strange country, and ready to blaspheme his friends, who, by their solicitations, procured for him so unhappy a situation.

Permit me to mention to you, that, in my opinion, the natural complaisance of this country often carries people too far in the article of *recommendations*. You give them with too much facility to persons of whose real characters you know nothing, and sometimes at the request of others of whom you know as little. Frequently, if a man has no useful talents, is good for nothing and burdensome to his relations, or is indiscreet, profligate, and extravagant, they are glad to get rid of him by sending him to the other end of the world; and for that purpose scruple not to recommend him to those they wish should recommend him to others as "*un bon sujet, plein de mérite*," etc., etc. In consequence of my crediting such recommendations, my own are out of credit, and I cannot advise anybody to have the least dependence on them. If, after knowing this, you persist in desiring my recommendation for this person, who is known neither to

*me* nor to *you*, I will give it, though, as I said before, I ought to refuse it.[1]

These applications are my perpetual torment. People will believe, notwithstanding my repeated declarations to the contrary, that I am sent hither to engage officers. In truth, I never had any such orders. It was never so much as intimated to me, that it would be agreeable to my constituents. I have even received for what I have done of the kind, not indeed an absolute rebuke, but some pretty strong *hints* of disapprobation. Not a day passes in which I have not a number of soliciting visits, besides letters. If I could gratify all, or any of them, it would be a pleasure. I might, indeed, give them the recommendation and the promises they desire, and thereby please them for the present; but, when the certain disappointment of the expectations with

[1] For cases of this kind, and where it was absolutely *impossible* to refuse, Dr. Franklin drew up the following as a model for such letters of recommendation, and actually employed it in some instances, to shame the persons making such indiscreet applications; and to endeavor, in some measure, to put a stop to them.—W. T. F.

*Model of a Letter of Recommendation of a person you are unacquainted with.*

"PARIS, 2 April, 1777.

"SIR:—The bearer of this, who is going to America, presses me to give him a letter of recommendation, though I know nothing of him, not even his name. This may seem extraordinary, but I assure you it is not uncommon here. Sometimes, indeed, one unknown person brings another equally unknown, to recommend him; and sometimes they recommend one another! As to this gentleman, I must refer you to himself for his character and merits, with which he is certainly better acquainted than I can possibly be. I recommend him, however, to those civilities, which every stranger, of whom one knows no harm, has a right to; and I request you will do him all the good offices, and show him all the favor, that, on further acquaintance, you shall find him to deserve. I have the honor to be, etc."

which they will so obstinately flatter themselves shall arrive, they must curse me for complying with their mad requests, and not undeceiving them; and will become so many enemies to our cause and country.

You can have no conception how I am harassed. All my friends are sought out and teazed to teaze me. Great officers of all ranks, in all departments; ladies, great and small, besides professed solicitors, worry me from morning to night. The noise of every coach now that enters my court terrifies me. I am afraid to accept an invitation to dine abroad, being almost sure of meeting with some officer or officer's friend, who, as soon as I am put in good humor by a glass or two of champagne, begins his attack upon me. Luckily I do not often in my sleep dream of these vexatious situations, or I should be afraid of what are now my only hours of comfort. If, therefore, you have the least remaining kindness for me, if you would not help to drive me out of France, for God's sake, my dear friend, let this, your twenty-third application, be your last. Yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXI

### TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

PARIS, 13 June, 1777.

SIR:—The bearer, M. le Comte Kotkouski, a Polish officer, is recommended to me by several persons of worth here, as a man of experience in military

affairs, and of tried bravery. He has lost his family and estate in Poland, by fighting there in the cause of liberty, and wishes, by engaging in the same cause, to find a new country and new friends in America. Count Pulaski, who was a general of the confederates in Poland, and who is gone to join you, is esteemed one of the greatest officers in Europe. He can give you the character of this M. Kotkouski, who served under him as lieutenant-colonel.

It is with regret that I give letters of introduction to foreign officers, fearing that you may be troubled with more than you can provide for, or employ to their and your own satisfaction. When particular cases seem to have a claim to such letters, I hope you will excuse my taking the liberty. I give no expectations to those who apply for them; I promise nothing; I acquaint them, that their being placed when they arrive is a great uncertainty, and that, the voyage being long, expensive, and hazardous, I counsel them not to undertake it. This honest gentleman's zeal is not to be discouraged by such means; he determines to go and serve as a volunteer, if he cannot be employed immediately as an officer; but I wish and hope that your Excellency may find a better situation for him, and that he will be a useful officer. He has the advantage of understanding English, and will soon speak it intelligently. He also speaks German, and some other European languages, and the Latin. With the truest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCLXII

### TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

PARIS, 13 June, 1777.

SIR:—The person who will have the honor of delivering this to your Excellency is Monsieur le Baron de Frey, who is well recommended to me as an officer of experience and merit, with a request that I would give him a letter of introduction. I have acquainted him that you are rather overstocked with officers, and that his obtaining employment in your army is an uncertainty; but his zeal for the American cause is too great for any discouragements I can lay before him, and he goes over at his own expense, to take his chance, which is a mark of attachment that merits our regard. He will show your Excellency the commissions and proofs of his military service hitherto, and I beg leave to recommend him to your notice. With the sincerest esteem and respect,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXIII

### TO CAPT. JOHNSON

PASSY, July 22, 1777.

SIR:—The bearer, M. Le Chevr. de Kninon, who is desirous of going to America, is well recommended to me as a person of character and merit. If he takes his passage with you, I make no doubt that you will treat him with all the civilities due to a gentleman, in which you will very much oblige, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCLXIV

### TO GEN. WASHINGTON

PASSY NEAR PARIS, 4 September, 1777.

SIR:—The gentleman who will have the honor of waiting upon you with this letter is the Baron de Steuben, lately a lieutenant-general in the king of Prussia's service, whom he attended in all his campaigns, being his aide-de-camp, quartermaster-general, etc. He goes to America with a true zeal for our cause, and a view of engaging in it and rendering it all the service in his power. He is recommended to us by two of the best judges of military merit in this country, M. de Vergennes and M. de St. Germain, who have long been personally acquainted with him, and interest themselves in promoting his voyage, from a full persuasion that the knowledge and experience he has acquired by twenty years' study and practice in the Prussian school may be of great use in our armies. I therefore cannot but wish that our service may be made agreeable to him.

I have the honor to be, etc.

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## DCLXV

### TO RICHARD PETERS

PASSY, 12 September, 1777.

SIR:—The bearer, M. Gérard, is recommended to me by M. Dubourg, a gentleman of distinction here, and a hearty friend to our cause. I enclose his let-

ter, that you may see the favorable manner in which he speaks of M. Gérard. I thereupon take the liberty of recommending the young gentleman to your civilities and advice, as he will be quite a stranger there, and to request that you would put him in the way of serving as a volunteer in our armies. I am, sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXVI

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 14 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR:—I received duly your letter of May 2d, including a copy of one you had sent me the year before, which never came to hand, and which it seems has been the case with some I wrote to you from America. Filled though your letters have always been with sentiments of good-will to both countries, and earnest desires of preventing their ruin and promoting their mutual felicity, I have been apprehensive that, if it were known that a correspondence subsisted between us, it might be attended with inconvenience to you. I have therefore been backward in writing, not caring to trust the post, and not well knowing whom else to trust with my letters. But being now assured of a safe conveyance, I venture to write to you, especially as I think the subject such a one as you may receive a letter upon without censure.

Happy should I have been if the honest warnings

I gave of the fatal separation of interests, as well as of affections, that must attend the measures commenced while I was in England, had been attended to, and the horrid mischief of this abominable war been thereby prevented. I should still be happy in any successful endeavors for restoring peace, consistent with the liberties, the safety, and the honor of America. As to our submitting to the government of Great Britain, it is vain to think of it. She has given us, by her numberless barbarities (by her malice in bribing slaves to murder their masters, and savages to massacre the families of farmers; with her baseness in rewarding the unfaithfulness of servants, and debauching the virtue of honest seamen intrusted with our property) in the prosecution of the war, and in the treatment of the prisoners, so deep an impression of her depravity, that we never again can trust her in the management of our affairs and interests. It is now impossible to persuade our people, as I long endeavored, that the war was merely ministerial, and that the nation bore still a good-will to us. The infinite number of addresses printed in your gazettes, all approving the conduct of your government towards us, and encouraging our destruction by every possible means, the great majority in Parliament constantly manifesting the same sentiments, and the popular public rejoicings on occasion of any news of the slaughter of an innocent and virtuous people, fighting only in defence of their just rights; these, together with the recommendations of the same measures by even your celebrated moralists and divines, in their writ-

ings and sermons, that are still approved and applauded in your great national assemblies, all join in convincing us that you are no longer the magnanimous, enlightened nation we once esteemed you, and that you are unfit and unworthy to govern us, as not being able to govern your own passions.

But, as I have said, I should be nevertheless happy in seeing peace restored. For though, if my friends, and the friends of liberty and virtue, who still remain in England, could be drawn out of it, a continuance of this war to the ruin of the rest would give me less concern, I cannot, as that removal is impossible, but wish for peace for their sakes, as well as for the sake of humanity, and preventing further carnage.

This wish of mine, ineffective as it may be, induces me to mention to you that, between nations long exasperated against each other in war, some act of generosity and kindness towards prisoners on one side has softened resentment, and abated animosity on the other, so as to bring on an accommodation. You in England, if you wish for peace, have at present the opportunity of trying this means with regard to the prisoners now in your gaols. They complain of very severe treatment. They are far from their friends and families, and winter is coming on, in which they must suffer extremely if continued in their present situation: fed scantily on bad provisions, without warm lodging, clothes, or fire, and not suffered to invite or receive visits from their friends, or even from the humane and charitable of their enemies.

I can assure you, from my own certain knowledge,

that your people, prisoners in America, have been treated with great kindness; they have been served with the same rations of wholesome provisions with our own troops, comfortable lodgings have been provided for them, and they have been allowed large bounds of villages in the healthy air, to walk and amuse themselves with on their parole. Where you have thought fit to employ contractors to supply your people, these contractors have been protected and aided in their operations. Some considerable act of kindness towards our people would take off the reproach of inhumanity in that respect from the nation, and leave it where it ought with more certainty to lie, on the conductors of your war in America. This I hint to you, out of some remaining good-will to a nation I once loved sincerely. But, as things are, and in my present temper of mind, not being over-fond of receiving obligations, I shall content myself with proposing that your government would allow us to send or employ a commissary to take some care of those unfortunate people. Perhaps on your representations this might speedily be obtained in England, though it was refused most inhumanly at New York.

If you could have leisure to visit the gaols in which they are confined, and should be desirous of knowing the truth relative to the treatment they receive, I wish you would take the trouble of distributing among the most necessitous, according to their wants, five or six hundred pounds, for which your drafts on me here shall be punctually honored. You could then be able to speak with some certainty to the

point in Parliament, and this might be attended with good effects.

If you cannot obtain for us permission to send a commissary, possibly you may find a trusty, humane, discreet person at Plymouth, and another at Portsmouth, who would undertake to communicate what relief we may be able to afford those unfortunate men, martyrs to the cause of liberty. Your king will not reward you for taking this trouble, but God will. I shall not mention the gratitude of America; you will have what is better—the applause of your own good conscience. Our captains have set at liberty above two hundred of your people, made prisoners by our armed vessels and brought into France, besides a great number dismissed at sea on your coasts, to whom vessels were given to carry them in. But you have not returned us a man in exchange. If we had sold your people to the Moors at Sallee, as you have many of ours to the African and East India Companies, could you have complained?

In revising what I have written, I found too much warmth in it, and was about to strike out some parts. Yet I let them go, as they will afford you this one reflection: "If a man naturally cool, and rendered still cooler by old age, is so warmed by our treatment of his country, how much must those people in general be exasperated against us? And why are we making inveterate enemies by our barbarity, not only of the present inhabitants of a great country, but of their infinitely more numerous posterity, who will in future ages detest the name of *Englishman*, as much as the children in Holland now do those of *Alva* and

*Spaniard.*" This will certainly happen, unless your conduct is speedily changed, and the national resentment falls, where it ought to fall heavily, on your ministry, or perhaps rather on the king, whose will they only execute.

With the greatest esteem and affection, and best wishes for your prosperity, I have the honor to be, dear sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXVII

### TO A FRIEND [1]

PASSY, 14 October, 1777.

SIR:—I am much obliged by your communication of the letter from England. I am of your opinion, that it is not proper for publication here. Our friend's expressions concerning Mr. Wilson will be thought too angry to be made use of by one philosopher when speaking of another, and on a philosophical question. He seems as much heated about this *one point* as the Jansenists and Molinists were about the *five*. As to my writing any thing on the subject,

[1] A controversy had lately been raised among the philosophers in England respecting *pointed* and *blunt* lightning conductors. Mr. Wilson was the champion for blunt conductors, in opposition to the theory of Dr. Franklin. Pointed conductors had been erected at the queen's palace, but by the advice of Mr. Wilson they were taken down, and blunt ones substituted in their place. Dr. Ingenhousz, who was then in England, took up the subject with considerable warmth against Mr. Wilson, and wrote a letter to a gentleman in Paris, which he desired might be shown to Dr. Franklin. The above letter was written to that gentleman, who, as requested, had communicated the one he received from Dr. Ingenhousz.

which you seem to desire, I think it not necessary, especially as I have nothing to add to what I have already said upon it in a paper read to the committee [1] who ordered the conductors at Purfleet, which paper is printed in the last French edition of my writings.

I have never entered into any controversy in defence of my philosophical opinions; I leave them to take their chance in the world. If they are *right*, truth and experience will support them; if *wrong*, they ought to be refuted and rejected. Disputes are apt to sour one's temper, and disturb one's quiet. I have no private interest in the reception of my inventions by the world, having never made, nor proposed to make, the least profit by any of them. The king's changing his *pointed* conductors for *blunt* ones is, therefore, a matter of small importance to me. If I had a wish about it, it would be that he had rejected them altogether as ineffectual. For it is only since he thought himself and family safe from the thunder of Heaven that he dared to use his own thunder in destroying his innocent subjects. I am, sir, yours, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXVIII

### TO CAPTAIN THOMPSON AND C. HINMAN

PARIS, 25 November, 1777.

SIR:—We advise you on your return to L'Orient to put your ship in readiness for sea,—Capt. Hinman

[1] "Report on Lightning Conductors for the Powder Magazines at Purfleet," drawn up by Dr. Franklin, August 21, 1772. See that date.

will do the same,—and after you have obtained the best intelligence to be had of the British merchant-ships and property. As it is by no means safe to return into the ports of France, you will calculate your stores, so as to have a sufficiency for your cruise, which we cannot indeed be particular in the direction of. It has been suggested that one or more of the India ships returning may be intercepted, that part of the West India homeward-bound ships may be expected about this time, as well as transports returning from New York and elsewhere in America, and that by cruising in the proper latitudes you may meet with them. That the British factories and commerce on the African coast at this time lie without any force sufficient to protect them, and that by running along that coast you may greatly annoy and distress the enemy in that quarter, and afterwards go for the West Indies.

As you and Captain Hinman have already considered these several plans for a cruise, we leave with you to determine which to prefer, and the manner in prosecuting either, or any other that may appear more likely to answer the design of your commission. We are happy in observing the harmony and confidence which subsists between you and Captain Hinman, and hope the same prevails between your officers and men, which we are certain you will cultivate through the whole of your expedition, in which we recommend to you, to avoid giving any offence to the flags of neutral powers, and to show them proper marks of respect and friendship. As you may meet with vessels of the enemy so near the coast of Eu-

rope, that you may be under the necessity of sending them into some port of France, we advise you to agree with Messrs. Goularde, etc., on the method of conduct in such case, previous to your departure, and give orders to the officers to whom you give the command of such prizes, accordingly thereto. Whenever you judge it prudent to dismiss prisoners, subjects of his Britannic Majesty, we advise you to take from them in writing an acknowledgment of their having been your prisoners, their quality, place of residence, and that they are dismissed by you in confidence that an equal number of the subjects of the thirteen United States of the same rank, that now are, or may hereafter be prisoners to his said Britannic Majesty will be set at liberty. You are also to deliver a copy of such writing to the prisoners, enjoining them to deliver the same on their arrival in Britain to the Lords of the British Admiralty, and by the first opportunity inclose a duplicate to the committee or board of marine in Boston, and another to us, with an account of your proceedings. We shall deliver Captain Hinman a copy of this letter, who will proceed in concert with you in the cruise.

With best wishes—[*incomplete*]

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## DCLXIX

### TO MR. THORNTON

You will receive herewith a letter to Lord North and another to Sir Grey Cooper, Secretary of the

Treasury, to which you are to endeavor to obtain answers.

As the purpose is to obtain permission to visit and examine into the condition of our people in their gaols, and administer to their relief, we hope a request so consonant to humanity will not be refused. But if you cannot obtain such permission, yet (if not absolutely forbidden) we desire you would endeavor to see the prisoners, take an account of their names, the rank or quality they served in, the state they belonged to, in what vessel and by whom they were taken, and such other particulars as may tend to give us perfect information of their circumstances.

But before you leave London to visit the prisoners, wait on Mr. Hartley (for whom also you have a letter which you will deliver as soon as you arrive) and desire his advice or orders; and if he should be so kind as to give you any relating to the premises, you are to follow the same punctually in your future proceedings.

You will receive herewith fifty guineas for travelling expenses, of which you will render an account.

We wish you a good journey, being, sir, your most humble servants.[1]

[1] On the 23d February of this year the Commissioners wrote to Lord Stormont, the British Ambassador in Paris, proposing to exchange 100 British seamen, prisoners taken by the American frigate *Reprisal*, for an equal number of American captives in England. Of this letter Stormont took no notice. The Commissioners then wrote another, which does not appear however to have been sent. They then sent another, which Stormont acknowledged in these insolent terms:

"The King's Ambassador receives no applications from rebels, unless they come to implore his Majesty's mercy."

## DCLXX

### TO SIR GREY COOPER

PARIS, 11 December, 1777.

DEAR SIR:—Receiving frequent accounts by American prisoners who have escaped from your gaols, of the miserable situation and hard treatment of their countrymen at Portsmouth and Plymouth, we have prevailed with a gentleman, Major Thornton (to us a stranger, but who appears a man of humanity), to visit the prisons there, and give from us some relief to those unfortunate men. I hope that through your interest he may obtain a permission for that purpose. I have wished that some voluntary act of compassion on the part of your government towards those in your power had appeared in abating the rigors of their confinement, and relieving their pressing necessities, as such generosity towards enemies has naturally an effect in softening and abating animosity in their compatriots and disposing to reconciliation. This, if I had any influence with your ministers I should recommend as prudent; being w[illegible]t would at

The Commissioners returned this missive with one signed by themselves and couched in the following terms:

"In answer to a letter which concerns some of the most material interests of humanity and of the two nations, Great Britain and the United States of America, now at war, we received the enclosed indecent paper as coming from your Lordship, which we return for your Lordship's more mature consideration."

There were probably not a thousand Americans in the English prisons, but they were badly treated and provoked a very voluminous correspondence between agents of the governments, and a very bitter feeling in America towards the English Government. For an instructive review of this correspondence see Hale's *Franklin in France*, Chap. XI.

least secure a continuance of that kind usage your people have always experienced with us. Mr. Thornton is charged with a letter to Lord North, which I request you would procure him an opportunity of delivering, and endeavoring to obtain an answer; perhaps it may not be thought proper to give any; but I am sure it will not be an insolent one like that from Lord Stormont to a similar application. The remembrance of ancient friendship encourages me to request this. If it is too much, you can prevent a repetition of it by making no reply. With my affectionate respects to Lady Cooper, and love to my former young friends, I am ever, dear sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXXI

### TO JAMES LOVELL [1]

PARIS, 21 December, 1777.

SIR:—I see in a vote of Congress shown to me by Captain Franval, that Mr. Deane is disowned in some of his agreements with officers. I, who am upon the spot, and know the infinite difficulty of resisting the powerful solicitations of great men, who if disobliged might have it in their power to obstruct the supplies he was then obtaining, do not wonder that, being then a stranger to the people, and unacquainted with

[1] A member of Congress from Massachusetts, and for several years a member of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, in which capacity he corresponded with the American commissioners and ministers in Europe.

the language, he was at first prevailed on to make some such agreements, when all were recommended, as they always are, as *officiers expérimentés, braves comme leurs épées, pleins de courage, de talents, et de zèle pour notre cause*, etc., etc., in short, mere Cæsars, each of whom would have been an invaluable acquisition to America. You can have no conception how we are still besieged and worried on this head, our time cut to pieces by personal applications, besides those contained in dozens of letters by every post, which are so generally refused that scarce one in a hundred obtains from us a simple recommendation to civilities.

I hope, therefore, that favorable allowance will be made to my worthy colleague on account of his situation at the time, as he has long since corrected that mistake, and daily approved himself, to my certain knowledge, an able, faithful, active, and extremely useful servant of the public; a testimony I think it my duty of taking this occasion to make to his merit, unasked, as, considering my great age, I may probably not live to give it personally in Congress, and I perceive he has enemies.[1]

You will see the general news in the papers in particular; I can only say at present, that our affairs go well here; and that I am, with much respect, sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Silas Deane was recalled by Congress, in November, 1776, mainly through the influence of Arthur Lee. Congress never formulated any charges against him, neither did it pass any vote of censure or approbation of his official conduct. He returned to France in 1780, but felt so aggrieved by the treatment he had received, that he finally allowed himself to enter into relations with the English Government, which

## DCLXXII

### A DIALOGUE BETWEEN BRITAIN, FRANCE, SPAIN, HOLLAND, SAXONY, AND AMERICA

*Britain.* Sister of Spain, I have a favor to ask of you. My subjects in America are disobedient, and I am about to chastise them; I beg you will not furnish them with any arms or ammunition.

*Spain.* Have you forgotten, then, that when my subjects in the Low Countries rebelled against me, you not only furnished them with military stores, but joined them with an army and a fleet? I wonder how you can have the impudence to ask such a favor of me, or the folly to expect it!

*Britain.* You, my dear sister France, will surely not refuse me this favor.

*France.* Did you not assist my rebel Huguenots with a fleet and an army at Rochelle? And have you not lately aided privately and sneakingly my rebel subjects in Corsica? And do you not at this instant keep their chief pensioned, and ready to head a fresh revolt there, whenever you can find or make an opportunity? Dear sister, you must be a little silly!

*Britain.* Honest Holland! You see it is remembered I was once your friend; you will therefore be mine on this occasion. I know, indeed, you are accustomed to smuggle with these rebels of mine. I will wink at that; sell them as much tea as you please,

compromised him seriously for a time at least, with his country people, and failed to shield him from the humiliations of extreme poverty and exile in his declining years.

to enervate the rascals, since they will not take it of me; but for God's sake don't supply them with any arms!

*Holland.* 'T is true you assisted me against Philip, my tyrant of Spain, but have I not assisted you against one of your tyrants [1]; and enabled you to expel him? Surely that account, as we merchants say, is *balanced*, and I am nothing in your debt. I have indeed some complaints against *you*, for endeavoring to starve me by your *Navigation Acts;* but, being peaceably disposed, I do not quarrel with you for that. I shall only go on quietly with my own business. Trade is my profession; 't is all I have to subsist on. And, let me tell you, I shall make no scruple (on the prospect of a good market for that commodity) even to send my ships to Hell and supply the Devil with brimstone. For you must know, I can insure in London against the burning of my sails.

*America to Britain.* Why, you old bloodthirsty bully! You, who have been everywhere vaunting your own prowess, and defaming the Americans as poltroons! You, who have boasted of being able to march over all their bellies with a single regiment! You, who by fraud have possessed yourself of their strongest fortress, and all the arms they had stored up in it! You, who have a disciplined army in their country, intrenched to the teeth, and provided with every thing! Do *you* run about begging all Europe not to supply those poor people with a little powder and shot? Do you mean, then, to fall upon them

[1] James the Second.

naked and unarmed, and butcher them in cold blood? Is this your courage? Is this your magnanimity?

*Britain.* Oh! you wicked—Whig—Presbyterian—Serpent! Have you the impudence to appear before me after all your disobedience? Surrender immediately all your liberties and properties into my hands, or I will cut you to pieces. Was it for this that I planted your country at so great an expense? That I protected you in your infancy, and defended you against all your enemies?

*America.* I shall not surrender my liberty and property, but with my life. It is not true, that my country was planted at your expense. Your own records[1] refute that falsehood to your face. Nor did you ever afford me a man or a shilling to defend me against the Indians, the only enemies I had upon my

[1] See the Journals of the House of Commons, 1642, viz.:

"*Die Veneris, Martii* 10°, 1642.

"Whereas the plantations in New England have, by the blessing of Almighty God, had good and prosperous success, *without any public charge to this State;* and are now likely to prove very happy for the propagation of the Gospel in those parts, and very beneficial and commodious to this kingdom and nation; the Commons now assembled in Parliament do, for the better advancement of those plantations, and the encouragement of the planters to proceed in their undertaking, ordain, that all merchandises and goods, that by any merchant, or other person or persons whatsoever, shall be exported out of this kingdom of England into New England, to be spent, used, or employed there; or, being of the growth of that *kingdom*, shall be from thence imported hither, or shall be laden or put on board in any ship or vessel for necessaries in passing or returning to and fro; and all and every the owner or owners thereof, shall be freed and discharged of and from paying and yielding any custom, subsidy, taxation, imposition, or other duty for the same, either inward or outward, either in this kingdom or New England, or in any port, haven, creek, or other place whatsoever, until the House of Commons shall take further order therein to the contrary. And all and singular customers, etc., are to observe this order."

own account. But, when you have quarrelled with all Europe, and drawn me with you into all your broils, then you value yourself upon protecting me from the enemies you have made for me. I have no natural cause of difference with Spain, France, or Holland, and yet by turns I have joined with you in wars against them all. You would not suffer me to make or keep a separate peace with any of them, though I might easily have done it to great advantage. Does your protecting me in those wars give you a right to fleece me? If so, as I fought for you, as well as you for me, it gives me a proportionable right to fleece you. What think you of an American law to make a monopoly of you and your commerce, as you have done by your laws of me and mine? Content yourself with that monopoly if you are wise, and learn justice if you would be respected!

*Britain.* You impudent b——h! Am not I your mother country? Is not that a sufficient title to your respect and obedience?

*Saxony. Mother country!* Ha! ha! ha! What respect have *you* the front to claim as a mother country? You know that *I* am *your* mother country, and yet you pay me none. Nay, it is but the other day that you hired ruffians [1] to rob me on the highway [2] and burn my house! [3] For shame! Hide your face and hold your tongue! If you continue this conduct, you will make yourself the contempt of Europe!

*Britain.* O Lord! Where are my friends?

[1] Prussians.

[2] They entered and raised contributions in Saxony.

[3] And they burnt the fine suburbs of Dresden, the capital of Saxony.

*France, Spain, Holland, and Saxony, all together.* Friends! Believe us, you have none, nor ever will have any, till you mend your manners. How can we who are your neighbors have any regard for you, or expect any equity from you, should your power increase, when we see how basely and unjustly you have used both your *own mother and your own children?*

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## DCLXXIII

### A CATECHISM RELATIVE TO THE ENGLISH NATIONAL DEBT

*Question* 1. Supposing this debt to be only one hundred and ninety-five millions of pounds sterling at present, although it is much more,[1] and that was all to be counted in shillings, that a man could count at the rate of one hundred shillings per minute, for twelve hours each day till he has counted the whole, how long would he take in doing it?

*Answer.* One hundred and forty-eight years one hundred and nine days and twenty-two hours.

*Q.* 2. The whole of this sum being three thousand nine hundred millions of shillings, and the coinage standard being sixty-two in the Troy pound, what is the whole weight of this sum?

*A.* Sixty-one millions seven hundred and fifty-two thousand four hundred and seventy-six Troy pounds.

[1] At present (1777) it is said to be at least two hundred and thirty millions.

*Q.* 3. How many ships would carry this weight, suppose one hundred tons each?

*A.* Three hundred and fourteen ships.

*Q.* 4. How many carts would carry this weight, suppose a ton in each?

*A.* Thirty-one thousand four hundred and fifty-two carts.

*Q.* 5. The breadth of a shilling being one inch, if all these shillings were laid in a straight line, close to one another's edges, how long would that line be that would contain them?

*A.* Sixty-one thousand five hundred and fifty-two miles; which is nine thousand five hundred and seventy-two miles more than twice round the whole circumference of the earth.

*Q.* 6. Suppose the interest of this debt to be three and a half per cent. per annum, what does the whole annual interest amount to?

*A.* Six millions seven hundred and seventy thousand pounds.

*Q.* 7. How doth the government raise this interest annually?

*A.* By taxing those who lent the principal, and others.

*Q.* 8. When will government be able to pay the principal?

*A.* When there is more money in England's treasury than there is in all Europe.

*Q.* 9. And when will that be?

*A.* Never.

## DCLXXIV

### TO RALPH IZARD

PASSY, 29 January, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I received yours late last evening. Present circumstances, which I will explain to you when I have the honor of seeing you, prevent my giving it a full answer now. The reasons you offer had before been all under consideration. But I must submit to remain some days under the opinion you appear to have formed, not only of my poor understanding in the general interests of America, but of my defects in sincerity, politeness, and attention to your instructions. These offences, I flatter myself, admit of fair excuses, or rather will be found not to have existed. You mention that you *feel yourself hurt*. Permit me to offer you a maxim, which has through life been of use to me, and may be so to you, in preventing such imaginary hurts. It is: "Always to *suppose* one's friends *may be right*, till one *finds* them wrong, rather than *to suppose them wrong* till one *finds* them right." You have heard and imagined all that can be said or supposed on one side of the question, but not on the other. I am, nevertheless, with sincere esteem, dear sir, your most obedient and humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.[1]

[1] Mr. Izard was selected by Congress as a Commissioner to go to Tuscany. As there was nothing for him to do there at the time, he tarried in Paris. The treaty of alliance was negotiated during his stay, but his advice or aid appears not to have been solicited. He complained of this to Dr. Franklin, whom he seemed disposed to hold responsible for what he regarded as a lack of official courtesy. This letter is the reply to his complaint. Izard's letter may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. II., p. 372.—EDITOR.

## DCLXXV

### TO JAMES HUTTON [1]

PASSY, 1 February, 1778.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND:—You desired that if I had no proposition to make I would at least give my advice. I think it is Ariosto who says that all things lost on earth are to be found in the moon; on which somebody remarked that there must be a great deal of good advice in the moon. If so, there is a good deal of mine, formerly given and lost in this business. I will, however, at your request give a little more, but without the least expectation that it will be followed; for none but God can at the same time give good counsel and wisdom to make use of it.

You have lost by this mad war, and the barbarity with which it has been carried on, not only the government and commerce of America, and the public revenues and private wealth arising from that commerce, but what is more, you have lost the esteem, respect, friendship, and affection of all that great and growing people, who consider you at present, and whose posterity will consider you, as the worst and wickedest nation upon earth. A peace you may undoubtedly obtain by dropping all your pretensions to govern us; and, by your superior skill in huckstering negotiation, you may possibly make such an appar-

[1] James Hutton was a son of Dr. Hutton (who in the early part of his life had been a bookseller), and was for many years secretary to the Society of Moravians. He died April 25, 1795, in his eightieth year, at Oxstead Cottage, Surrey; and was buried in the Moravian cemetery at Chelsea. He was a well-known character, and very generally esteemed.—EDITOR.

ently advantageous bargain, as shall be applauded in your Parliament; but, if you cannot, with the peace, recover the affections of that people, it will not be a lasting nor a profitable one, nor will it afford you any part of that strength, which you once had by your union with them, and might (if you had been wise enough to take advice) have still retained.

To recover their respect and affection, you must tread back the steps you have taken. Instead of honoring and rewarding the American advisers and promoters of this war, you should disgrace them, with all those who have inflamed the nation against America by their malicious writings, and all the ministers and generals who have prosecuted the war with such inhumanity. This would show a national change of disposition, and a disapprobation of what had passed.

In proposing terms you should not only grant such as the necessity of your affairs may evidently oblige you to grant, but such additional ones as may show your generosity, and thereby demonstrate your goodwill. For instance, perhaps you might, by your treaty, retain all Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas. But if you would have a real friendly as well as able ally in America, and avoid all occasion of future discord, which will otherwise be continually arising on your American frontiers, you should throw in those countries. And you may call it, if you please, an indemnification for the burning of their towns, which indemnification will otherwise be some time or other demanded.

I know your people will not see the utility of such

measures, and will never follow them, and even call it insolence and impudence in me to mention them. I have, however, complied with your desire, and am, as ever, your affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—*February 12th.*—I wrote the above some time before I received yours, acquainting me with your speedy and safe return, which gave me pleasure. I doubted after I had written it, whether it would be well to send it; for as your proud nation despises us exceedingly, and demands and expects absolute and humble submission, all talk of treaty must appear impudence, and tend to provoke rather than conciliate. As you still press me by your last to say something, I conclude to send what I have written, for I think the advice is good, though it must be useless; and I cannot, as some amongst you desire, make propositions, having none committed to me to make; but we can treat, if any are made to us; which, however, we do not expect. I abominate with you all murder, and I may add, that the slaughter of men in an unjust cause is nothing less than murder. I therefore never think of your present ministers and their abettors, but with the image, strongly painted in my view, of their hands, red, wet, and dropping with the blood of my countrymen, friends, and relations. No peace can be signed by those hands. Peace and friendship will, nevertheless, subsist for ever between Mr. Hutton and his affectionate friend,

B. F.

## DCLXXVI

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 12 February, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—A thousand thanks for your so readily engaging in the means of relieving our poor captives, and the pains you have taken, and the advances you have made, for that purpose. I received your kind letter of the 3d instant, and send you enclosed a bill of one hundred pounds. I much approve of Mr. Wren's prudent as well as benevolent conduct in the disposition of the money, and wish him to continue doing what shall appear to him and to you to be right, which I am persuaded will appear the same to me and my colleagues here. I beg you will present him, when you write, my respectful acknowledgments.

Your "earnest caution and request, that nothing may ever persuade America to throw themselves into the arms of France, for that times may mend, and that an American must always be a stranger in France, but that Great Britain may for ages to come be their home," marks the goodness of your heart, your regard for us, and love of your country. But, when your nation is hiring all the cut-throats it can collect, of all countries and colors, to destroy us, it is hard to persuade us not to ask or accept aid from any power that may be prevailed with to grant it; and this only from the hope that, though you now thirst for our blood, and pursue us with fire and sword, you may, in some future time, treat us kindly. This is too much patience to be expected of us; indeed, I think it is not in human nature.

The Americans are received and treated here in France with a cordiality, a respect, and affection they never experienced in England when they most deserved it; and which is now (after all the pains taken to exasperate the English against them, and render them odious as well as contemptible) less to be expected there than ever. And I cannot see why we may not, upon an alliance, hope for a continuance of it, at least, as much as the Swiss enjoy, with whom France has maintained a faithful friendship for two hundred years past, and whose people appear to live here in as much esteem as the natives. America has been *forced* and *driven* into the arms of France. She was a dutiful and virtuous daughter. A cruel mother-in-law turned her out of doors, defamed her, and sought her life. All the world knows her innocence, and takes her part; and her friends hope soon to see her honorably married. They can never persuade her return and submission to so barbarous an enemy. In her future prosperity, if she forgets and forgives, it is all that can be reasonably expected of her. I believe she will make as good and useful a wife as she did a daughter, that her husband will love and honor her, and that the family from which she was so wickedly expelled, will long regret the loss of her.

I know not whether a peace with us is desired in England; I rather think it is not at present, unless on the old impossible terms of submission and receiving pardon. Whenever you shall be disposed to make peace upon equal and reasonable terms, you will find little difficulty, if you get first an honest ministry. The present have all along acted so deceitfully and

treacherously, as well as inhumanly, towards the Americans, that I imagine that the absolute want of all confidence in them to make a treaty, at present, between them and the Congress impracticable.

The subscription for the prisoners will have excellent effects in favor of England and Englishmen. The Scotch subscriptions for raising troops to destroy us, though amounting to much greater sums, will not do their nation half so much good. If you have an opportunity, I wish you would express our respectful acknowledgments and thanks to your committee and contributors, whose benefactions will make our poor people as comfortable as their situation can permit. Adieu, my dear friend. Accept my thanks for the excellent papers you enclosed to me. Your endeavors for peace, though unsuccessful, will always be a comfort to you, and in time, when this mad war shall be universally execrated, will be a solid addition to your reputation. I am ever, with the highest esteem, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—An old friend of mine, Mr. Hutton, a chief of the Moravians, who is often at the queen's palace, and is sometimes spoken to by the king, was over here lately. He pretended to no commission, but urged me much to propose some terms of peace, which I avoided. He has written to me since his return, pressing the same thing, and expressing with some confidence his opinion, that we might have every thing short of absolute independence, etc. Enclosed I send my answers open, that you may read them, and, if you please, copy, before you deliver or forward them. They will serve to show you more

fully my sentiments, though they serve no other purpose. B. F.

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## DCLXXVII

### TO THOMAS CUSHING

PASSY, 21 February, 1778.

SIR:—I received your favor by Mr. Austin, with your most agreeable congratulations on the success of the American arms in the Northern Department.[1]

[1] Surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga. The battle of Saratoga, which Colonel Creasy very properly rates among the ten great and decisive battles of history, resulted in the surrender of General Burgoyne with his whole army on the 17th October, 1777. Following the disasters of the colonial army at Germantown, this victory was most timely, and practically assured the ultimate victory of the American arms; for it secured to the colonies the open and cordial alliance of France. The news, which reached the American Commissioners at Passy on the 4th December, was received by the French with as fervent demonstrations of joy as if it was a victory achieved by their own arms. On the 12th a meeting of the French Cabinet was held, and on the 17th Gérard informed Franklin and his colleagues that the king had determined to acknowledge the independence of the revolted colonists, and to sign a treaty with them. In the same dispatch, in which the Commissioners were authorized to transmit this encouraging news to America, they were also enabled to announce to Congress the promise of 3,000,000 livres, with the prospect of an equal amount from Spain. A treaty of amity and commerce was signed on the 6th February, and at once sent out to America for ratification. The same day another treaty for a defensive alliance was concluded.

The news of Burgoyne's defeat and capture was sent out to the Commissioners in Paris by a special messenger, who was secretary to their Board of War, Mr. John Lothrop Austin; and a vessel was fitted up expressly for this business, such importance being very properly attached to the prompt delivery of this intelligence in Europe. He appears to have been expected when he arrived at Franklin's residence at Passy, for Deane, the Lees, Izard, Bancroft the spy, Beaumarchais, and probably de Chaumont, were at the door when the wheels of

In return, give me leave to congratulate you on the success of our negotiations here, in the completion of the two treaties with his most Christian Majesty: the one of amity and commerce, on the plan of that proposed by Congress, with some good additions; the other of alliance for mutual defence, in which the

Mr. Austin were heard in the courtyard. The tradition goes that before the young man had time to alight, Franklin cried out:

"Is Philadelphia taken?"

"Yes, sir." *

Upon hearing this, Franklin clasped his hands as if to go back into the house. "But, sir," added Austin, "I have better news than that. General Burgoyne and his whole army are prisoners of war."

The news, said Deane some time after, when describing the scene, "was like a sovereign cordial to the dying." It reached London on the night of December 2d, two days before it reached the Commissioners in Paris. Even in official circles the gravity of the disaster could not be disguised. Lord North said he was willing to resign his place if by so doing he could obtain peace. Gibbon, who reflected the less disguised inquietude of outside circles, wrote to Holroyd on the 4th December: "Dreadful news indeed! You will see them partly in the papers, and we have not yet any particulars. An English army of nearly ten thousand men laid down their arms and surrendered prisoners of war, on condition of being sent to England, and of never serving against America. They had fought bravely and were three days without eating. Burgoyne is said to have received three wounds; General Fraser with 2,000 men killed; Colonel Acland likewise killed. A general cry for peace."

The immediate effect of this news was, as stated by King George to Lord North on the day it was received, "to entirely overturn every plan proposed for strengthening the army, under the command of Lieutenant-General Clinton, with an intent of carrying on an active war in North America. What occurs now is to fix what numbers are necessary to defend New York, Rhode Island, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas; it is a joke to think of keeping Pennsylvania."

Lord North was severely censured for ignorance of the proceedings of the French court since December preceding. His *ignorance*, however, has been questioned.

* Philadelphia had fallen into Sir William Howe's power on the 20th September It was felt as a severe blow in America and at Passy, but it did not dishearten Franklin. "Well, Doctor," said an Englishman to Franklin, "Howe has taken Philadelphia." "I beg your pardon, sir," was the reply; "Philadelphia has taken Howe." This jest, no doubt intended, in part at least, to mask depression, proved prophetic. See Browning's *Bentham* Vol. X., p. 527.

most Christian king agrees to make a common cause with the United States, if England attempts to obstruct the commerce of his subjects with them; and guarantees to the United States their liberty, sovereignty, and independence, absolute and unlimited, with all the possessions they now have, or may have,

On the 13th of March, 1778, the Marquis de Noailles, then French Ambassador in London, delivered to Lord Weymouth, the English Secretary of State, a note formally announcing the treaty of amity and commerce, as lately signed between France and the United States. It remarked that the United States are in full possession of independence, as proclaimed by them on the 4th of July, 1776, and then proceeded in the following ironical, not to say derisive, terms: "In making this communication to the Court of London, the king (of France) is firmly persuaded it will find therein new proofs of his Majesty's constant and sincere disposition for peace; and that his Britannic Majesty, animated by the same sentiments, will equally avoid every thing that may alter their good harmony; and he will particularly take effective measures to prevent the commerce between his Majesty's subjects and the United States of North America from being interrupted."

Four days later Lord North delivered in Parliament a message from the throne, stating the receipt of information from the French king, that he had concluded a treaty of amity and commerce with his Majesty's revolted subjects in America, in consequence of which offensive communication, the British Ambassador at Paris had been ordered home.

On the 24th of March, Gibbon wrote to Holroyd: "The French Ambassador went off yesterday morning, not without some slight expression of ill-humor from John Bull. Lord Stormont is probably arrived to-day."

The battle of Saratoga gave the Americans the services of a formidable fleet, abundant ammunition, and military supplies; as much money as they needed, and the no longer disguised sympathies of all Europe. The result, so far as the independence of the colonies was concerned, was already in sight.

General Burgoyne was an illegitimate son of Lord Bingley. He owed his first advance in life to a runaway match with the daughter of the Earl of Derby. Burgoyne was a brave officer, though an unfortunate general; he was an effective speaker and a successful writer for the stage. He was also one of the writers for the Rolliad. He died in June 1792, and his remains were honored with a resting-place in Westminster Abbey.—EDITOR.

at the conclusion of the war; and the States in return guarantee to him his possession in the West Indies. The great principle in both treaties is a perfect equality and reciprocity; no advantage to be demanded by France, or privileges in commerce, which the States may not grant to any and every other nation.

In short, the king has treated with us generously and magnanimously; taken no advantage of our present difficulties, to exact terms which we would not willingly grant, when established in prosperity and power. I may add that he has acted wisely, in wishing the friendship contracted by these treaties may be durable, which probably might not be if a contrary conduct had taken place.

Several of the American ships, with stores for the Congress, are now about sailing under the convoy of a French squadron. England is in great consternation, and the minister, on the 17th instant confessing that all his measures had been wrong and that peace was necessary, proposed two bills for quieting America; but they are full of artifice and deceit, and will, I am confident, be treated accordingly by our country.

I think you must have much satisfaction in so valuable a son, whom I wish safe back to you, and am, with great esteem, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—The treaties were signed by the plenipotentiaries on both sides February 6th, but are still for some reasons kept secret, though soon to be published. It is understood that Spain will soon accede to the same. The treaties are forwarded to Congress by this conveyance.

## DCLXXVIII

TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 23 February, 1778.

SIR:—The enclosed, which you sent me, contained a letter from Mr. Hartley in which he acquaints me that on the 17th Lord North had made his propositions towards a conciliation with America, and asked leave to bring in two bills, one to renounce all claim of taxation, the other to empower commissioners to treat with any persons or bodies of men in America on a peace; which was unanimously agreed to. He tells me Lord North had expressed to him the strongest desire of accommodation, and even wished him to come over to Paris and talk with us. I should send you the letter, which marks strongly the consternation they are in; but, M. Gérard having written a note acquainting Mr. Deane that they had news from England that a treaty was on foot between Washington and Howe, and desiring to know if we had any intelligence of it, I wrote the enclosed in answer, and sent Mr. Hartley's letter to him, to show that the ministers in England had no such news. Mr. Hartley refers me to Mr. Thornton for the titles of the two bills. I return Mr. Thornton's letters. I am, very respectfully, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXXIX

TO M. GÉRARD

PASSY, 24 February, 1778.

SIR:—Understanding that reports have been spread at Versailles of treaties on foot in America

between the Congress and the English Commissioners; or here between us and the English Ministry. I send you an American newspaper of December 19th,[1] by which you will see, in the reports, passages marked with a pen, in what manner such and those who occasion them, are treated there. I send you also the only correspondence I have had which has any relation to the same subject here, that you may judge of the credit due to such reports.

I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXXX

### TO M. GÉRARD

PASSY, 25 February, 1778.

SIR:—I received last night the enclosed letter from a Member of Parliament,[2] and the two frivolous bills which the ministry in their present consternation have thought fit to propose, with a view to support their public credit a little longer at home, and to amuse and divide, if possible, our people in America. You will see that they have dispatched a frigate with the news, but I hope yours from Bordeaux will arrive first. I wish to have the original letters again when you have perused them. I have the honor to be, with great respect, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

[1] This document from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is thus endorsed: "Enclosing *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, 19 Dec., 1777."

[2] This letter, copied from the Archives in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is endorsed: "Wharton, to Lee, 24 February, 1778. *London Evening Post*, 18 January, 1778."

## DCLXXXI

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 26 February, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I received yours of the 18th and 20th of this month, with Lord North's proposed bill. The more I see of the ideas and projects of your ministry, and their little arts and schemes of amusing and dividing us, the more I admire the prudent, manly, and magnanimous propositions contained in your intended motion for an address to the king. What reliance can we have on an act expressing itself to be only a declaration of the *intention* of Parliament concerning the *exercise* of the right of imposing taxes in America, when, in the bill itself, as well as in the title, a right is supposed and claimed which never existed; and a *present intention* only is declared not to use it, which may be changed by another act next session, with a preamble that, this *intention* being found inexpedient, it is thought proper to repeal this act and resume the exercise of *the right* in its full extent. If any solid permanent benefit was intended by this, why is it confined to the colonies of North America and not extended to the loyal ones in the sugar islands? But it is now useless to criticise, as all acts that suppose your future government of the colonies can be no longer significant.

In the act for appointing Commissioners, instead of full powers to agree upon terms of peace and friendship, with a promise of ratifying such treaty as they shall make in pursuance of those powers, it is declared that their agreements shall have no force nor

effect, nor be carried into execution, till approved of by Parliament; so that every thing of importance will be uncertain. But they are allowed to proclaim a cessation of arms, and revoke their proclamation, as soon as, in consequence of it, our militia have been allowed to go home; they may suspend the operation of acts prohibiting trade, and take off that suspension when our merchants, in consequence of it, have been induced to send their ships to sea; in short, they may do every thing that can have a tendency to divide and distract us, but nothing that can afford us security. Indeed, sir, your ministers do not know us. We may not be quite so cunning as they, but we have really more sense, as well as more courage, than they have ever been willing to give us credit for; and I am persuaded these acts will rather obstruct peace than promote it, and that they will not answer in America the mischievous and malevolent ends for which they were intended. In England they may indeed amuse the public creditors, give hopes and expectations that shall be of some present use, and continue the mismanagers a little longer in their places. *Voilà tout!*

In return for your repeated advice to us not to conclude any treaty with the House of Bourbon, permit me to give (through you) a little advice to the Whigs in England. Let nothing induce them to join with the Tories in supporting and continuing this wicked war against the Whigs of America, whose assistance they may hereafter want to secure their own liberties, or whose country they may be glad to retire to for the enjoyment of them.

If peace, by a treaty with America upon equal

terms, were really desired, your Commissioners need not go there for it; supposing, as by the bill they are empowered "to treat with such person or persons as in their wisdom and discretion they shall think meet," they should happen to conceive that the Commissioners of the Congress at Paris might be included in that description. I am ever, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.[1]

P. S.—Seriously, on further thoughts, I am of opinion that if wise and honest men, such as Sir George Saville, the Bishop of St. Asaph, and yourself, were to come over here immediately with powers to treat, you might not only obtain peace with America, but prevent a war with France.

[1] Early in March George III. appointed five Commissioners to negotiate terms of peace with Congress, with power to concede almost every thing but independence. On the 26th of March, the king, in a letter to his prime-minister, betrayed his conviction that Franklin was about the most formidable enemy he had in the world, as in a public sense he undoubtedly was. He wrote:

"The many instances of the inimical conduct of Franklin towards this country makes me aware that hatred to this country is the constant object of his mind [*the king's faculty of expressing himself was not in the least royal*], and therefore I trust that, fearing the rebellion, colonies may accept the generous offers I am enabled by Parliament to make them by the Commissioners now to be sent to America; that his chief aim in what he has thrown out is to prevent their going, or to draw out of administration an inclination to go farther lengths than the act of Parliament will authorize. That information from him may prevent America from concluding with the Commissioners.

"Yet I think it so desirable to end the war with that country, to be enabled, with redoubled ardor, to avenge the faithless and insolent conduct of France, that I think it may be proper to keep open the channel of intercourse with that insidious man."—EDITOR.

## DCLXXXII

### TO MRS. CATHERINE GREENE

PARIS, 28 February, 1778.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND:—Don't be offended at the word *old*. I don't mean to call you an *old woman;* it relates only to the age of our friendship, which on my part has always been a sincerely affectionate one, and, I flatter myself, the same on yours.

I received your kind letter from Boston of October 28th, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of the welfare of you and your family. I continue hearty, as do my two grandsons, who present their respects to you and Mr. Greene, being pleased with your remembrance of them. We are all glad to hear of Ray, for we all love him. I have been often much concerned for my friends at Warwick, hearing that the enemy was so near them. I hope your troubles will not be of much longer duration; for, though the wickedness of the English court and its malice against us are as great as ever, its horns are shortened, its strength diminishes daily, and we have formed an alliance here, and shall form others, that will help to keep the bull quiet and make him orderly.

I chat, you see, as usual, anyhow with you, who are kind enough never to criticise improprieties in my compositions, or any thing else. I see by yours that my sister's granddaughter is married. I wish the young folks joy and lasting happiness. I pity my poor old sister, to be so harassed and driven about by the enemy; for I feel a little myself the inconvenience of being driven about by my friends.

I live here in great respect, and dine every day with great folks; but I still long for home and for repose, and should be happy to eat Indian pudding in your company, and under your hospitable roof.[1] Re-

[1] Franklin's appearance in the salons of Paris, even before he was received at court, produced a memorable sensation throughout the whole of Europe. Segur, one of the best authorities of the period, says:

"Rien n'etait plus suprenant que le contraste du luxe de notre capitale, de l'élégance de nos modes, de la magnificence de Versailles, de toutes ces traces vivantes de la fierté monarchique de Louis XIV., de la hauteur polie mais superbe, de nos grands, avec l'habillement presque rustique, le maintién simple mais fier, le langage libre et sans détour, la chevelure sans apprêts et sans poudre, enfin avec cet air antique qui semblait transporter tout à coup dans nos murs au milieu de la civilization amollie et servile du 18ième siécle, quelques sages contemporains de Plato, ou des républicains du temps de Cato et de Fabius."

The scene which occurred on the 20th March, 1778, when the American plenipotentiaries were presented to the king and introduced at court, says Schlosser in his *History of the XVIIIth Century*, "may be said, in some measure, to have no longer belonged to the olden times, but to the period of the Revolution, since not only those who had a right to appear at court were present in multitudes and masses, but the populace assembled in the court of the palace and played a part on the occasion. Franklin alone was the subject of universal admiration, as the *ideal* of a patriarchal republic and of idyllic simplicity; and of the three he alone remained as the proper ambassador. Silas Deane was soon recalled by Congress, and Lee had made himself an object of suspicion and hatred, although from very different causes. The whole rested upon Franklin, and every one regarded him as the image of that ideal and poetic democracy which Rousseau had so charmingly described. Franklin was accompanied to the audience by a very large number of Americans, collected together from various quarters; and as soon as he appeared in the royal chambers, notwithstanding the rules of etiquette, he was received with loud clapping of hands and joyful applause. When the embassy retired in solemn procession from the royal audience-chamber, and crossed the court to the minister of foreign affairs, it was again received by the assembled people with rounds of cheers and shouts of applause; and wherever Franklin afterwards showed himself in Paris, he was the wonder of the day, and was greeted by the multitude with cheers.

member me kindly to the remainder of the Wards, and to all that wish me well. Assure Mr. Greene of my sincere esteem and respect, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXXXIII

### A TRUE HISTORY OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COLONIES AND THE AUTHOR OF THE STAMP ACT

PASSY, 12 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—In the pamphlets you were so kind as to lend me there is one important fact misstated, ap-

Even the young court, with its sentimentality and frivolity, was quite delighted with the novel contrast of the sleek, unpowdered hair, the round hats, the plain brown broadcloth quaker coats of the republicans, with the tasselled and embroidered garments of the courtiers and their curled hair, powdered and fragrant with pomades.

"The old man was born and trained to mix uncorrupted in all the courtly politeness of a people which at that time sought for its chief honor in courtliness and gallantry, to indulge agreeably in all the silliness of society, to profit by his intercourse with the ladies, as a prudent man must, to show himself in the highest degree grateful for all the polite attentions which he received, and yet, like a prudent tradesman, never to deviate an inch from the track of solid speculation. Like a practical citizen who only regards what is substantial as gain, Franklin looked upon all this fashionable excitement and applause as merely symptoms of a favorable conjuncture for business, from which he was to derive as much advantage as he possibly could. He himself informs us that he dined out six days in the week and profited by the admiration and idolizing of the ladies."

Nor was the sensation that he produced in Europe transitory, nor due in any considerable degree, if at all, to his position. He is to this day the most famous, the most widely known, and most admired American, living or dead; his writings continue to be reprinted in almost every language; his name is given to streets, to charitable, beneficent, and financial corporations all over the world, and his golden sentences and anecdotes continue to enrich every literature.—EDITOR.

parently from the writers not having been furnished with good information. It is the transaction between Mr. Grenville and the colonies, wherein he understands that Mr. Grenville demanded of them a specific sum, that they refused to grant any thing, and that it was on their refusal only that he made the motion for the *Stamp Act*. No one of the particulars was true. The fact was this:

Some time in the winter of 1763–4 Mr. Grenville called together the agents of the several colonies, and told them that he purposed to draw a revenue from America; and to that end his intention was to levy a stamp duty on the colonies by act of Parliament in the ensuing session, of which he thought it fit that they should be immediately acquainted, that they might have time to consider; and if any other duty equally productive would be more agreeable to them, they might let him know it. The agents were therefore directed to write this to their respective Assemblies, and communicate to him the answers they should receive: the agents wrote accordingly.

I was a member in the Assembly of Pennsylvania when this notification came to hand. The observations there made upon it were, that the ancient, established, and regular method of drawing aid from the colonies was this: The occasion was always first considered by their sovereign in his Privy Council, by whose sage advice he directed his Secretary of State to write circular-letters to the several governors, who were directed to lay them before their Assemblies. In those letters the occasion was explained to their satisfaction, with gracious expressions of

his Majesty's confidence in their known duty and affection, on which he relied that they would grant such sums as should be suitable to their abilities, loyalty, and zeal for his service; that the colonies had always granted liberally on such requisitions, and so liberally during the late war, that the king, sensible they had granted much more than their proportion, had recommended it to Parliament five years successively to make them some compensation, and the Parliament accordingly returned them £200,000 a year, to be divided among them; that the proposition of taxing them, in Parliament, was therefore both cruel and unjust; that, by the constitution of the colonies, their business was with the king in matters of aid; they had nothing to do with any financier, nor he with them; nor were the agents the proper channels through which requisitions should be made; it was therefore improper for them to enter into any stipulation, or make any proposition to Mr. Grenville about laying taxes on their constituents by Parliament, which had really no right at all to tax them, especially as the notice he had sent them did not appear to be by the king's order, and perhaps was without his knowledge, as the king, when he would obtain any thing from them, always accompanied his requisition with good words, but this gentleman, instead of a decent demand, sent them a menace, that they should certainly be taxed, and only left them the choice of the manner. But all this notwithstanding, they were so far from refusing to grant money that they resolved to the following purpose: "That they always

had, so they always should think it their duty to grant aid to the crown, according to their abilities, whenever required of them in the usual constitutional manner." I went soon after to England, and took with me an authentic copy of this resolution, which I presented to Mr. Grenville before he brought in the Stamp Act. I asserted in the House of Commons (Mr. Grenville being present) that I had done so, and he did not deny it. Other colonies made similar resolutions, and had Mr. Grenville, instead of that act, applied to the king in council for such requisitional letters to be circulated by the Secretary of State, I am sure he would have obtained more money from the colonies by their voluntary grants than he himself expected from his stamps. But he chose compulsion rather than persuasion, and would not receive from their good-will what he thought he could obtain without it. And thus the golden bridge which the ingenious author thinks the Americans unwisely and unbecomingly refused to hold out to the minister and Parliament, was actually held out to them, but they refused to walk over it.

This is the true history of that transaction; and as it is probable there may be another edition of that excellent pamphlet, I wish this may be communicated to the candid author, who, I doubt not, will correct that error.

I am ever, with sincere esteem, dear sir, your most obedient, humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

## DCLXXXIV

### TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 17 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—One of the Messrs. Beaumann, of Bordeaux, some time since told me that they intended to send a packet every month to America, on their own account, they having great concerns there. He offered, indeed, to carry our despatches; but, as at this distance we could not know the captains, nor the degree of confidence that might be placed in them, and having other conveyances, I have not yet seen occasion to make use of that offer. These are the packets I mentioned to the gentleman as likely to afford him the convenience of a passage, and he understood more than I said to him, when he imagined there was a packet to sail soon with our despatches. I knew of no such thing proposed; and certainly, if it had been proposed by me, or with my knowledge, I should have acquainted you with it.

A gentleman, lately arrived from Boston, has presented for acceptance bills drawn on us by Mr. Hancock, as the President of the Congress, for about one hundred and eighty thousand livres. I have also received a letter, mentioning that other bills are drawn on us by Mr. Laurens, the present President, of which an account is promised in a future letter, this not giving the amount, but only directing us to accept them when they appear. The one hundred and eighty thousand livres are an old debt contracted by our army in Canada, and not for interest of money. What the others are, I know not; and I cannot con-

ceive what encouragement the Congress could have had from any of us to draw on us for any thing but that interest. I suppose their difficulties have compelled them to it. I see we shall be distressed here by these proceedings, and I want to consult with you about the means of paying the bills. If you will name an hour when you shall be at leisure to-day, I will call upon you. I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXXXV

### TO JAMES HUTTON

PASSY, 24 March, 1778.

My dear old friend was in the right, not "to call in question the sincerity of my words, where I say, February the 12th, *we can treat, if any propositions are made to us.*" They were true then, and are so still, if Britain has not declared war with France; for in that case we shall undoubtedly think ourselves obliged to continue the war as long as she does. But methinks you should have taken us at our word, and have sent immediately your propositions in order to prevent such a war, if you did not choose it. Still I conceive it would be well to do it, if you have not already rashly begun the war. Assure yourself nobody more sincerely wishes perpetual peace among men than I do; but there is a prior wish, that they would be equitable and just; otherwise such peace is not possible, and indeed wicked men have no right to expect it. Adieu. I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCLXXXVI

### TO RALPH IZARD

PASSY, 30 March, 1778.

SIR:—From the account you give me of the man, who pretends to be of Carolina, as well as from my own observation of his behavior, I entertain no good opinion of him, and shall not give him the pass he desires.

Much and very important business has hitherto prevented my giving you the satisfaction you desired, but you may depend upon my endeavoring to give it to you as soon as possible.[1] An answer was written

[1] The same grievance is here alluded to as in the letter of January 29th. Mr. Izard thought himself slighted by the Commissioners, in regard to the treaty, and particularly by Dr. Franklin, and requested an explanation. See above, p. 244. Mr. Izard waited impatiently for this explanation in writing, but, not receiving it, he sent his secretary, Mr. John J. Pringle, with a letter to Dr. Franklin. The following is Mr. Pringle's account of the interview, as he reported it to Mr. Izard:

"In compliance with your request, I waited on Dr. Franklin and delivered to him your letter; he had scarcely read it when he said: 'Mr. Izard has written me a very angry letter; please to tell him that he has only made use of general assertions of my having done wrong, which I cannot otherwise answer than by denying. If I have given him any causes of offence, he should let me know what they are.' To this I replied, that you had been kind enough to form so good an opinion of me, as to admit me into a share of your confidence; therefore I could take upon me to say that you were persuaded you had clearly stated, in the several letters he had received from you, circumstances affording sufficient grounds of offence. He said he should be glad to know what those circumstances were. I answered, in the first place, that, conceiving it your duty as a member of the States, having a considerable fortune there, and intrusted with a commission from Congress, to communicate as occasion offered all the intelligence you could, you found this communication greatly obstructed by a concealment on the part of Dr. Franklin of proper opportunities, when it was quite unnecessary, or when the end of secrecy might be answered, though

to your letter of the 5th of this month, and signed by us all, which I thought had been sent to you, till Mr. Lee informed me that, having communicated to you the contents, you told him it would not be satisfactory, and desired it might be reconsidered, and he had

you had been intrusted with the knowledge of them. Upon which Dr. Franklin told me that you had only complained of this in the present letter, and as to the particular opportunity you mentioned by M. Gérard, or Mr. Deane, he had not himself looked upon it as a good or proper one, and had not himself made use of it to write.

"As another ground of complaint, I observed that, while the commercial treaty was on the carpet, you considered one article as highly unreasonable and inexpedient, and therefore expressly objected to it; you had in a letter fully specified the reasons upon which your disapprobation was founded, and had sent this letter to Dr. Franklin, in hopes of his removing your scruples, and setting you right if you were wrong, or letting your reasons and objections, if they were just, produce some good effect before the conclusion of the treaty, but you had never been favored with any answer on the subject, though you had repeatedly requested it. Dr. Franklin alleged that he would have given a full and satisfactory answer, but he had been prevented by business and various avocations; that he was still willing to give one, but could not conceive why you should be so impatient. Suppose he could not give it for a month hence, what great inconvenience would it occasion? I observed that the sooner you had it, you might be the better prepared to guard against any misrepresentation. Dr. Franklin assured me that he had not been, nor would he ever be, guilty of any misrepresentation; so far from it, that he had not even written any thing concerning the matter. I told him perhaps you might choose to lay it before Congress, and his answer might enable you to do it more fully and satisfactorily. Dr. Franklin said you should have an answer, but you must be patient; for he really was very much engaged by other business, and interrupted by people continually coming in upon him, though some upon frivolous errands, as was the case with the two Frenchmen, just gone away, who came only to ask him to buy cloth.

"I suggested as a third ground of complaint, that you had been directed by the Congress to propose to the Court of Tuscany a commercial treaty similar to the one concluded with this Court, which you therefore required as necessary for your regulation, in pursuance of the instructions of Congress, who directed you should have not only the original treaty, but also the alterations which might be proposed;

accordingly stopped it for that purpose. We have not since had an opportunity of reconsidering it; and, as the end is now answered by the communication of the treaty, perhaps it is not necessary.

I condole with you sincerely on the great loss sustained in Charleston by the fire in January last, said to have destroyed six hundred houses, valued with the goods at a million sterling. I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

both were, nevertheless, withheld from you by Dr. Franklin without the least regard to your applications. Dr. Franklin replied: 'Did he go into Tuscany? Has not the treaty been sent to him?' I said you had good reasons for staying; that the treaty was kept from you till the other day, when perhaps it was necessary for you to have had it as early as possible, even previous to your departure, to give it the maturer consideration, and because there might be explanations you would like to have made here; or observations might occur to you which you might think it advisable to communicate to Congress, to have their further instructions as soon as you could.

"I do not recollect that Dr. Franklin made any direct reply to this. He observed, that he was clear he had not given you any just cause of offence, or reasonable grounds of complaint; that he was studious to avoid contention; he acknowledged that he owed you an answer, but, though he was in your debt, he hoped you would be a merciful creditor; he would say, as the debtor in the Scripture, 'have patience, and I will pay thee all'; that you certainly ought to give him time, as you had urged so much matter as would require a pamphlet in answer. I told him that I was sure it was far from your disposition to court quarrels; that if the reasons he gave in his answer to you were just and satisfactory, you would undoubtedly allow them their full weight; that satisfaction you were desirous of having, and were anxious to have the affair ended. He said he should endeavor to do it as soon as possible; in the meantime, he hoped to have no more such angry letters from you; his answer he promised should be a cool one, and that people who wrote such angry letters should keep them till they sufficiently reflected on the contents before they sent them.—*April 26th.*"—EDITOR.

## DCLXXXVII

### TO WILLIAM PULTENEY [1]

PASSY, 30 March, 1778.

SIR:—When I first had the honor of conversing with you on the subject of peace, I mentioned it as my opinion that every proposition which implied our voluntarily agreeing to return to a dependence on Britain was now become impossible; that a peace on equal terms undoubtedly might be made; and that, though we had no particular powers to treat of peace

[1] Mr. Pulteney was a member of Parliament, and had come over to Paris as a secret agent from the ministry, for the purpose of consulting Dr. Franklin respecting the terms of a reconciliation with America, contained in Lord North's bill for appointing commissioners. That the object of his visit might not be publicly suspected, he assumed the name of Williams. The above letter is an answer to the following note; or, rather, the substance of a conversation that had passed between them in consequence of it. The letter was not sent. See letter to David Hartley, dated October 26, 1778.

"29 March, 1778.

"Mr. Williams returned this morning to Paris, and will be glad to see Dr. Franklin whenever it is convenient for the Doctor, at the Hôtel Frasilière, Rue Tournon. It is near the hotel where he lodged when the Doctor saw him a fortnight ago. He does not propose to go abroad, and therefore the Doctor will find him at any hour. He understands that Mr. Alexander is not yet returned from Dijon, which he regrets."

Mr. Alexander soon returned to Paris, and wrote to Dr. Franklin, on the 4th of April, as follows:

"Upon a night's reflection, it is thought right that you should be possessed of the enclosed, to be afterwards returned to me without taking a copy in case no business is done. Will you let me know by the bearer if we are to see you in town to-day and when, that I may be at hand?"

The paper here mentioned as enclosed probably contained the propositions which had been brought by Mr. Pulteney, and the substance of which he had communicated to Dr. Franklin in conversation. —EDITOR.

with England, we had general powers to make treaties of peace, amity, and commerce with any state in Europe, by which I thought we might be authorized to treat with Britain, who, if sincerely disposed to peace, might save time and much bloodshed by treating with us directly.

I also gave it as my opinion that in the treaty to be made, Britain should endeavor, by the fairness and generosity of the terms she offered, to recover the esteem, confidence, and affection of America, without which the peace could not be so beneficial, as it was not likely to be lasting; in this I had the pleasure to find you of my opinion.

But I see, by the propositions you have communicated to me, that the ministers cannot yet divest themselves of the idea that the power of Parliament over us is constitutionally absolute and unlimited; and that the limitations they may be willing now to put to it by treaty are so many favors or so many benefits, for which we are to make compensation.

As our opinions in America are totally different, a treaty on the terms proposed appears to me utterly impracticable either here or there. Here we certainly cannot make it, having not the smallest authority to make even the declaration specified in the proposed letter, without which, if I understood you right, treating with us cannot be commenced.

I sincerely wish as much for peace as you do, and I have enough remaining of good-will for England to wish it for her sake as well as for our own, and for the sake of humanity. In the present state of things, the proper means of obtaining it, in my opinion,

are to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and then enter at once into a treaty with us for a suspension of arms, with the usual provisions relating to distances; and another for establishing peace, friendship, and commerce such as France has made. This might prevent a war between you and that kingdom, which, in the present circumstances and temper of the two nations, an accident may bring on every day, though contrary to the interest and without the previous intention of either. Such a treaty we might probably now make, with the approbation of our friends; but if you go to war with them on account of their friendship for us, we are bound, by ties stronger than can be formed by any treaty, to fight against you with them as long as the war against them shall continue.

May God at last grant that wisdom to your national councils which he seems long to have denied them, and which only sincere, just, and humane intentions can merit or expect. With great personal esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXXXVIII

### TO MR. PRESIDENT LAURENS

PASSY, NEAR PARIS, 31 March, 1778.

SIR:—Mons. Gérard, who does me the honor to be the bearer of this letter, is the same plenipotentiary with whom we completed the treaties that have secured to America the friendship and support of

this powerful monarchy. In the whole conduct of that affair, he manifested a candor, uprightness, and equity of disposition, as well as an affection for our cause and country, that impressed us with the highest esteem for him; and I congratulate you on his being minister from this court to the Congress, as the king's appointment of a person who is considered as our friend, to fill so important a situation, is an additional mark of his Majesty's good-will to us, and presages, in my opinion, an exercise of the good understanding so happily begun between the two countries; which no one can be more desirous or more capable of promoting.

I beg leave, therefore, to recommend him warmly not only to all the civilities and respects that are due to his public character, but to those tender regards and affectionate grateful attentions that friendship claims and which are so proper to cultivate and strengthen it. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, sir, yours, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCLXXXIX

### TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 31 March, 1778.

SIR:—My colleague, Mr. Deane, being recalled by Congress, and no reasons given that have yet appeared here, it is apprehended to be the effect of some misrepresentations from an enemy or two at Paris and at Nantes. I have no doubt that he will be able clearly to justify himself; but, having lived intimately with him now fifteen months, the greatest

part of the time in the same house, and been a constant witness of his public conduct, I cannot omit giving this testimony, though unasked, in his behalf, that I esteem him a faithful, active, and able minister, who, to my knowledge, has done in various ways great and important services to his country, whose interests I wish may always, by every one in her employ, be as much and as effectually promoted. With my dutiful respects to the Congress, I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXC

### TO MONSIEUR GÉRARD

PASSY, 1 April, 1778.

Once more, dear sir, adieu. Mr. Deane set out last night. He will show you the propositions. They would probably have been accepted, if they had been made two years ago. I have answered that they have come too late; and that every kind of acknowledgment of the government of Great Britain, how small soever, is now become impracticable. I thank you for the information of Mr. de Sartine's courier. My best wishes attend you. B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXCI

### TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 1 April, 1778.

SIR:—There is a style in some of your letters, I observe it particularly in the last, whereby superior

merit is assumed to yourself in point of care and attention to business, and blame is insinuated on your colleagues without making yourself accountable, by a direct charge of negligence or unfaithfulness, which has the appearance of being as artful as it is unkind. In the present case I think the insinuation groundless.

I do not know that either Mr. Deane or myself ever showed any unwillingness to settle the public accounts. The banker's book always contained the whole. You could at any time as easily have obtained the account from them as either of us, and you had abundantly more leisure. If, on examining it, you had wanted explanation of any article, you might have called for it and had it. You never did either. As soon as I obtained the account, I put it into your hands, and desired you to look into it, and I have heard no more of it since till now, just as Mr. Deane is on the point of departing. Mr. Deane, however, left with me before the receipt of your letter both the public papers, and explications of the several articles in the account that came within his knowledge. With these materials, I suppose we can settle the account whenever you please. You have only to name the day and place, and I will attend to the business with you. I have the honor to be, with great esteem, sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

## DCXCII

### TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 4 April, 1778.

SIR:—Mr. Deane communicated to me his intention of setting out for America immediately as a secret, which he desired I would mention to nobody. I complied with his request. If he did not think fit to communicate it to you also, it is from him you should demand his reasons.[1]

[1] The contents of the letter, to which this is an answer, are so remarkable, and they are so pointedly alluded to in the answer itself, that, in justice to both parties, it seems proper that they should accompany each other. The following is Mr. Lee's letter:

"CHAILLOT, 2 April, 1778.

"SIR:—It was with the utmost surprise that I learned yesterday that M. Gérard was to set out in the evening for America, in a public character, and that Mr. Deane was to accompany him, without either you or he having condescended to answer my letter of the preceding day.

"That a measure of such moment as M. Gérard's mission, should have been taken without any communication with the Commissioners is hardly credible. That, if it was communicated, you should do such violence to the authority that constituted us, together with so great an injury and injustice to me, is equally astonishing. If success to the mission, and unanimity on the subject in Congress, were your wish, with what propriety could you make it a party business, and not unite all the Commissioners in the advising and approving a measure, in which you desired their friends and constituents might be unanimous?

"I do not live ten minutes' distance from you. The communication, therefore, could not be attended with delay or difficulty. Within these few days I have seen you frequently, as usual. Particularly, on Monday I was with you at your house for some time. I asked you about the sailing of the ships at Nantes, expressing my desire to know when we should have an opportunity of writing. You said you did not know when they sailed. I asked if there were no letters, none but one from M. Dumas having been shown to me for some time. You answered, No. I had, at a former meeting, asked you whether it was not proper for us to send an express to give intelligence of such consequential events as our being acknowledged here, and the treaty

This court has an undoubted right to send as ministers whom it pleases, and where it pleases, without advising with us, or desiring our approbation. The measure of sending M. Gérard as a minister to Congress was resolved on without consulting me; but I think it a wise one, and, if I did not, I do not conceive that I have any right to find fault with it. France was not consulted when we were sent here. Your angry charge, therefore, of our "making a party business of it," is groundless; we had no hand in the business. And, as we neither "acted nor advised"

avowed. You told me it would be sufficient to write by the ship from Nantes (for it was afterwards you mentioned there were two), as the news being public would find its way fast enough.

"Upon M. Amiel, who came from your house to mine, mentioning, on Tuesday, that Mr. Deane was to go away in a few days, I wrote to you and him to repeat what I have so often requested, that the public accounts might be settled, for which Mr. Deane had taken possession of all the vouchers, and that the public papers might be delivered to us before his departure. You made no answer. I sent my secretary again yesterday to desire an answer. You sent me a verbal one, that you would settle the accounts with me any day after to-morrow. Your reason for not doing it before was that it was not your business. Now it seemed your business only, and Mr. Deane had no concern with it. The delivery of the public papers, which are the property of all, not of any one of the Commissioners, though you and Mr. Deane have constantly taken them to yourselves, was too immaterial to answer.

"During all this time, and with these circumstances, you have been totally silent to me about the present opportunity of writing to Congress, about the important public measure in agitation, and about Mr. Deane's departure. Nay, more, what you have said, and the manner in which you acted, tended to mislead me from imagining that you knew of any such thing. Had you studied to deceive the most distrusted and dangerous enemy of the public, you could not have done it more effectually.

"I trust, sir, that you will think with me, that I have a right to know your reasons for treating me thus. If you have any thing to accuse me of, avow it, and I will answer you. If you have not, why do you act so inconsistently with your duty to the public, and injuriously to me? Is the present state of Europe of so little moment

in it, which you suppose, your other high-sounding charge of our doing, thereby, violence to the authority that constituted us, and a great injury and injustice to you, is equally without foundation. As to the concealing it from you, reasons were given by Mr. Deane that appeared to me satisfactory, and founded entirely on views of public good. I promise to communicate them to you hereafter, if you desire it, that you may have an opportunity of refuting them, if you can. At present, it is not proper.

to our constituents, as not to require our joint consideration, and information to them? Is the character of the court here, and of the person sent to negotiate with our constituents, of no consequence for them to be apprised of? Is this the example, you, in your superior wisdom, think proper to set, of order, decorum, confidence, and justice?

"I trust too, sir, that you will not treat this letter, as you have done many others, with the indignity of not answering it. Though I have been silent, I have not felt the less the many affronts of this kind, which you have thought proper to offer me. I have the honor to be, with great respect, ARTHUR LEE."

When Mr. Lee wrote this letter he was ignorant of the cause of the complaint contained in the first part of it. Count de Vergennes had been informed that intelligence had been communicated to England through the agency of Mr. Lee's secretary, which created an unfavorable suspicion. The facts are these: Mr. Lee sent his secretary to England, with the view of ascertaining the nature of the preparations that were making to fit out a fleet at Portsmouth. This secretary betrayed his trust, and revealed certain particulars in London for stock-jobbing purposes. Mr. Lee dismissed him as soon as his unfaithfulness was discovered. It was important that the intention of sending M. Gérard as a minister to the United States, and a fleet to America under Count d'Estaing, should remain a secret as long as possible, that the British Government might not take measures to counteract the objects for which they were designed. Count de Vergennes was apprehensive that, if the intelligence were made known to Mr. Lee, it would get to the ears of the British Ministry through the above suspected channel. He enjoined it, therefore, on Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane, not to mention the subject to their colleague. This injunction they were, of course, bound to observe.—EDITOR.

Your third paragraph, therefore, containing a particular account of what passed between you and me at my house on Monday, seems not to require any answer. I am still of the same opinion that, after having sent the treaties themselves by different good conveyances, in which treaties our public character was acknowledged in the most authentic manner, and the avowal of the transaction by the French ambassador to the king of England, which was in all the papers of Europe, the sending a vessel express to carry the news of paying our respects to court, which was likewise in the papers, was an expensive and altogether unnecessary operation.

I received your letter directed to Mr. Deane and myself relating to the accounts. I had no opportunity of showing it to him till the evening of his departure, and then he was in too much of a hurry to peruse it. I could not, therefore, sooner answer it. But I then wrote an answer, acquainting you that he had put into my hands the public papers, with all the information he could give relating to the accounts. It was intended to be transcribed fairly, and sent to you in the morning. Your secretary called for an answer before I had time to copy it. I had a good deal of company; and, thinking a verbal message might perhaps do as well and save the trouble, I desired him, with my compliments, to acquaint you that I was ready to settle the account with you at any time you should think fit to appoint, except to-morrow, when I should be otherwise engaged. As this verbal message offended you, though I cannot conceive why, I now send you the letter. In it, I com-

plain of your artful and, I think I may call them, unjust insinuations. You give me fresh instances in the letter I am answering. You magnify your zeal to have the public accounts settled, and insinuate that Mr. Deane and I prevented it, he by "taking possession of all the vouchers," and both of us by taking constantly the public papers to ourselves, which are the property of all the Commissioners.

When this comes to be read in the Committee, for whom it seems to be calculated, rather than for me, who know the circumstances, what can they understand by it, but that you are the only careful, honest man of the three, and that we have some knavish reasons for keeping the accounts in the dark, and you from seeing the vouchers? But the truth is, the papers naturally came into Mr. Deane's hands and mine; first, as he was engaged in the purchasing of goods for the Congress before either you or I came into France; next, as somebody must keep the papers, and you were either on long journeys to Spain, to Vienna and Berlin, or had a commission to go and reside in Spain, which it was expected would soon be executed; whereas Mr. Deane and I lived, almost constantly, in the same house, either at Paris or Passy; you, separate from us; and we did most of the business. Where then could the papers be so properly placed as with us, who had daily occasion to make use of them? I never knew that you desired to have the keeping of them. You never were refused a paper, or the copy of a paper, that you desired.[1]

[1] Mr. Lee's complaints about the official papers, which accumulated in the hands of the Commissioners, did not cease with the departure of

As to my not acquainting you with the opportunity of writing to Congress by Mr. Deane, we had lately written, and sent, by probably safe conveyances, all I know of importance to write. I, therefore, did not propose, nor do I write any letter to the Committee by him, especially as in my opinion, considering the route he was to take, he would not arrive so soon as other vessels, which may sail long after him. And he could himself give as good an account of our being at court, the only public transaction since our last letters, as we could write.

Mr. Deane. They continued long after Mr. Adams took the place of that Commissioner. For some time Mr. Adams lived in the same house with Dr. Franklin at Passy. To one of Mr. Lee's letters on this subject, Mr. Adams replied as follows:

"I have not asked Dr. Franklin's opinion concerning your proposal of a room in your house for the papers, and an hour to meet there, because I know it would be in vain; for I think it must appear to him more unequal still. It cannot be expected, that two should go to one, when it is as easy again for one to go to two; not to mention Dr. Franklin's age, his rank in the country, or his character in the world; nor that nine tenths of the public letters are constantly brought to this house, and will ever be carried where Dr. Franklin is. I will venture to make a proposition in my turn, in which I am very sincere; it is that you would join families with us. There is room enough in this house to accommodate us all. You shall take the apartments which belong to me at present, and I will content myself with the library room and the next to it. Appoint a room for business, any that you please, mine or another, a person to keep the papers, and certain hours to do business. This arrangement will save a large sum of money to the public, and, as it would give us a thousand opportunities of conversing together, which now we have not, and, by having but one place for our countrymen and others to go to, who have occasion to visit us, would greatly facilitate the public business. It would remove the reproach we lie under, of which I confess myself very much ashamed, of not being able to agree together, and would make the Commission more respectable, if not in itself, yet in the estimation of the English, the French, and the American nations; and, I am sure, if we judge by the letters we receive, it wants to be made more respectable, at least in the eyes of many persons of this country.—*Passy, October 10, 1778.*"—EDITOR.

You ask me why I act so inconsistently with my duty to the public? This is a heavy charge, sir, which I have not deserved. But it is to the public that I am accountable, and not to you. I have been a servant to many publics, through a long life; have served them with fidelity, and have been honored by their approbation. There is not a single instance of my ever being accused before of acting contrary to their interest or my duty. I shall account to the Congress, when called upon, for this my terrible offence of being silent to you about Mr. Deane's and M. Gérard's departure. And I have no doubt of their equity in acquitting me.

It is true, that I have omitted answering some of your letters, particularly your angry ones, in which you, with very magisterial airs, schooled and documented me, as if I had been one of your domestics. I saw in the strongest light the importance of our living in decent civility towards each other, while our great affairs were depending here. I saw your jealous, suspicious, malignant, and quarrelsome temper, which was daily manifesting itself against Mr. Deane and almost every other person you had any concern with. I, therefore, passed your affronts in silence, did not answer, but burnt, your angry letters, and received you, when I next saw you, with the same civility, as if you had never written them. Perhaps I may still pursue the same conduct, and not send you these. I believe I shall not, unless exceedingly pressed by you; for, of all things, I hate altercation.

One word more about the accounts. You tell me that my reason for not settling the accounts before

was, that it was not my business; now, it seemed my business only, and Mr. Deane had nothing to do with it. Both these positions are imaginary. I could never have given any such reasons, being always willing to settle accounts with everybody, and not having the least motive to delay or postpone the settlement of these. Nor could it seem that I should say Mr. Deane had nothing to do with it. He had done what he could towards it, and, being actually gone, could do no more. The infinity of business we have had is the true and only reason, that I know of, why they have not been settled—that is, why we did not meet, sit down, and compare the vouchers with the articles in the banker's account, in order to see that his charges were supported, and that he had given us due credit for the moneys we had put into his hands. This, I apprehend, is all we have to do here. It is to the Congress we are separately to account for the separate drafts we have made on him. This, Mr. Deane can do when he arrives, having taken a copy of the account with him.

If you think we should account to one another for our expenses, I have no objection, though I never expected it. I believe they will be found very moderate. I answer mine will, having had only the necessaries of life, and purchased nothing besides, except the *Encyclopædia*, nor sent a sixpence' worth of any thing to my friends or family in America. I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCXCIII

### TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 6 April, 1778.

SIR:—Mr. Williams had orders from Mr. Deane and myself to purchase and make up a large quantity of clothing, and ship the same in pursuance of the orders of Congress. I imagine you were not in France when this measure was taken, and so could not be consulted. But you certainly have been acquainted with it since your return. I never heard that you made any objection to it, and you may at any time have fuller information if desired. I think the orders of any two of us, in these cases, are sufficient, and that, if we have given directions to an agent of ours to draw on our banker in discharge of contracts made properly for the public service, his drafts ought to be honored. The reason of permitting him to draw on our banker, instead of ourselves, was, as I understand it, convenient at that time to mask more effectually our building and equipping vessels of force. If, in a single instance, he is known or suspected to have abused this confidence placed in him, I am ready to join with you in putting a stop to his proceedings by ordering his bills to be protested. If not, I think the public service requires that he should complete his orders, which, as far as I have ever heard, he has hitherto executed with great care, fidelity, and ability.

As to the want of funds with Mr. Grand, I suppose that, before the bills drawn on him become due, which

are charged to his account, and bring the balance against us, he will be fully supplied with what are necessary.

I send you herewith sundry letters relating to our affairs, for your perusal and advice upon them. I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXCIV

### TO THE GRAND PENSIONARY OF HOLLAND

PARIS, 10 April, 1778.

SIR:—We have the honor of acquainting your Excellency that the United States of North America being now an independent power, and acknowledged as such by this court, a treaty of amity and commerce is completed between France and the said States, of which we shall speedily send your Excellency a copy, to be communicated, if you think proper, to their High Mightinesses, for whom the United States have the greatest respect, and the strongest desire that a good understanding may be cultivated, and a mutually beneficial commerce established, between the people of the two nations, which, as will be seen, there is nothing in the above-mentioned treaty to prevent or impede.

We have the honor to be, with great respect,

Your Excellency's, etc.

[*On a separate paper.*]

The above is so written as that you may show it on occasion. We send enclosed a proposed draft of a

letter to the Grand Pensionary; but as we are unacquainted with forms, and may not exactly have hit your idea with regard to the matter and expression, we wish you would consult with our friend upon it, and return it with the necessary corrections.

P. S.—The letters you mention coming to you from England are for Mr. William Lee, and you will be so good as to forward them, with his name superscribed, and enclosed to Messrs. Faederic Gontard & Fils, Banquiers à Frankfort sur la Maine.

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## DCXCV

### TO M. DUMAS[1]

PASSY, 10 April, 1778.

SIR:—We received duly your despatch of the 3d instant, and approve very much the care and pains you constantly take in sending us the best intelligence of foreign affairs. We have now the pleasure of acquainting you that Mr. John Adams, a member of Congress, appointed to succeed Mr. Deane in this Commission, is safely arrived here. He came over in the *Boston*, a frigate of thirty guns belonging to the

[1] The occasion of this letter is thus described by John Adams in his Diary, *Works of John Adams*, Vol. III., p. 124:

"When Mr. Lee arrived at my lodgings one morning, it was proposed that a letter should be written to M. Dumas at the Hague, to inform him of my arrival; and my colleagues proposed that I should write it. I thought it an awkward thing for me to write an account of myself, and asked Dr. Franklin to write it, after we should have considered and agreed upon what should be written, which I thought the more proper, as he was the only one of us who had been acquainted with M.

United States. In the passage they met and made prize of a large English letter-of-marque ship of fourteen guns, the *Martha*, bound for New York, on whose cargo £70,000 sterling was insured in London. It contains abundance of necessaries for America, whither she is despatched, and we hope will get well into one of our ports.

Mr. Adams acquaints us that it had been moved in Congress to send a minister to Holland, but that although there was the best disposition towards that country, and desire to have and maintain a good understanding with their High Mightinesses and a free commerce with their subjects, the measure was respectfully postponed for the present, till their senti-

Dumas. Accordingly, on the 10th of April the letter was produced in these words, which I insert at full length, because it was the only public letter, I believe, which he wrote while I was with him in the Commission."

Charles William Frederick Dumas was a Swiss by birth, though he passed a large portion of his life in Holland. He was a man of letters, skilled in modern as well as the ancient languages, and in 1770, or thereabouts, edited an edition of Vattel's work on the *Laws of Nations*. When in Holland, shortly before returning to America, Dr. Franklin became acquainted with Dumas, and in 1775 recommended him to the Committee of Secret Correspondence in Congress as a suitable person to act as the secret agent of the committee in Holland. Dr. Franklin, who was a member of the committee, wrote his instructions, which bear date December 19, 1775, and on the 30th of April, 1776, Dumas commenced a correspondence which continued without interruption until John Adams was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary, when Dumas was employed by him as secretary and translator. When Mr. Adams was called to Paris Mr. Dumas acted as Chargé d' Affaires, and in this capacity exchanged with the Dutch government the ratification of the first treaty ever entered into between the United States and the Dutch Government. His communications were published by Mr. Sparks in Vol. IX. of *The Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, but as was too much his wont, not without some regrettable liberties with their text.—EDITOR.

ments on it could be known, from an apprehension that possibly their connections with England might make the receiving an American minister as yet inconvenient, and (if Holland should have the same goodwill toward us) a little embarrassing. Perhaps, as our independency begins to wear the appearance of greater stability since our acknowledged alliance with France, that difficulty may be lessened. Of this we wish you would take the most prudent methods privately to inform yourself. It seems clearly to be the interest of Holland to share in the rapidly growing commerce of her young sister republic; and as in the love of liberty, and bravery in the defence of it, she has been our great example, we hope circumstances and constitutions in many respects so similar may produce mutual benevolence; and that the unfavorable impressions made on the minds of some in America, by the rigor with which supplies of arms and ammunition were refused them in their distress, may soon be worn off and obliterated by a friendly intercourse and reciprocal good offices.

When Mr. Adams left America, which was about the middle of February, our affairs were daily improving, our troops well supplied with arms and provisions and in good order; and the army of General Burgoyne being detained for breaches of the capitulation, we had in our hands about ten thousand prisoners of the enemy. We are, sir, etc.

## DCXCVI

### TO EDWARD BANCROFT[1]

PASSY, 16 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I wish you would assure our friend that Dr. Franklin never gave any such expectations to Mr. Pulteney. On the contrary, he told him that

[1] This Edward Bancroft was an adventurer from Connecticut, who went to England, studied medicine, and settled as a physician in London. Bancroft, the historian, says of him, that he accepted the post of a paid American spy, to prepare himself for the more lucrative office of a double spy for the British ministers.

"The French government," says Bancroft, "was deliberating on the methods of encouraging commerce with the United Colonies. Replying to an inquiry of the Comptroller-General, Vergennes, on the 10th, advised to admit their ships and cargoes without exacting duties or applying the restrictive laws on their entry or departure; so that France might become the emporium of their commerce with other European nations. 'Take every precaution,' so he admonished his colleague, 'that our motives, our intentions, and, as far as possible, our proceedings, may be hidden from the English.'

"The attempt at concealment was vain. On the 11th, Vergennes admitted Deane to an interview. Reserving for the king's consideration the question of recognising the independence and protecting the trade of the United Colonies, he listened with great satisfaction to the evidences of their ability to hold out against British arms to the end of the year, and gave it as his private opinion that, in case they should reject the sovereignty of his Britannic Majesty, they might count on the unanimous wishes of the government and people of France, whose interest it would not be to see them reduced by force. Received again on the 20th, Deane made a formal request for two hundred light brass field-pieces, and arms and clothing for twenty-five thousand men. The arms were promised; Du Coudray, a distinguished engineer, who had given lessons to Count d'Artois, and who wished to serve in America, was employed to select from the public arsenals cannon of the old pattern that could be spared; and Beaumarchais, whom Vergennes authoritatively recommended, offered merchandise on credit to the value of three millions of livres. The minister did not suspect that Congress had committed its affairs to a man who was wanting in discernment and integrity. But Deane called over Bancroft as if he had been a colleague, showed him his

the Commissioners could not succeed in their mission, whether they went to recover the *dependence* or to *divide*. His opinion is confirmed by the enclosed resolves, which perhaps it may not be amiss to publish in England. Please to send me the newspaper.

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

letters of credence and his instructions, took him as a companion in his journeys to Versailles, and repeated to him exactly all that passed in the interview with the minister. Bancroft returned to England, and his narrative for the British ministry is a full record of the first official intercourse between France and the United States. The knowledge thus obtained enabled the British ambassador to embarrass the shipment of supplies by timely remonstrances, for the French cabinet was unwilling to appear openly as the accomplice of the insurgents." *

For Deane's misplaced confidence in this man there are some extenuating circumstances. Edward Bancroft had already achieved some reputation in England as a physician and naturalist. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and author of a work of some repute, entitled, *An Essay on the Natural History of Guiana.* In 1769, he had published a pamphlet supporting the legislative pretensions of the colonists, and under Franklin's direction had written notices of publications, relating to America, for the *Monthly Review.*

These were not all nor the most important considerations operating to disarm Deane's distrust.

In the instructions given by the Committee of Secret Correspondence to Silas Deane when he went to France as agent from Congress, they wrote to him: "You will endeavor to procure a meeting with Dr. Bancroft, by writing a letter to him, under cover to Mr. Griffiths, at Turnham Green, near London, and desiring him to come over to you, in France or Holland, on the score of old acquaintance. [Both were from Connecticut.] From him you may obtain a good deal of information of what is now going forward in England, and settle a mode of continuing a correspondence. It may be well to remit him a small bill to defray his expenses in coming to you, and avoid all political matters in your letter to him."

If these facts do not excuse, they much extenuate, Deane's confidence.—EDITOR.

* Bancroft's *Hist. of the United States*, Vol. IX., p. 62.

## DCXCVII

### FROM DAVID HARTLEY

PARIS, 23 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I will take care of all your commissions. This moment a second packet of infinite value is received, which I shall cherish as a mark of affection from you. I opened the letter by mistake, which came with it, and soon saw it was not for me. I hope you will excuse it. I choose rather to throw myself upon your goodness for the excuse, than any thing else. I shall not set out till between one and two; therefore, if you will be so good as to send me another copy, I will take care of it, and deliver it safely.

God bless you, my dear friend. No exertion or endeavor on my part shall be wanting, that we may some time or other meet again in peace. Your powers are infinitely more influential than mine. To those powers I trust my last hopes. I will conclude, "Blessed are the peace-makers."

Your affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.[1]

P. S.—If tempestuous times should come, take care of your own safety; events are uncertain, and men may be capricious.

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### DR. FRANKLIN'S ANSWER

I thank you for your kind caution, but having nearly finished a long life, I set but little value on

[1] Mr. Hartley was in Paris, on a secret mission from the British Ministry, with propositions for a peace, which Dr. Franklin did not approve.

what remains of it. Like a draper, when one chaffers with him for a remnant, I am ready to say: "As it is only the fag end, I will not differ with you about it; take it for what you please." Perhaps the best use such an old fellow can be put to, is to make a martyr of him. B. FRANKLIN.[1]

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## DCXCVIII

### TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 24 April, 1778.

SIR:—Mr. Hartley, a member of Parliament, an old acquaintance of mine, arrived here from London on Sunday last. He is generally in the opposition, especially on American questions, but has some respect for Lord North. In conversation, he expressed the strongest anxiety for peace with America, and appeared extremely desirous to know my sentiments of the terms which might probably be accepted if offered; whether America would not, to obtain peace,

[1] After Mr. Hartley returned to London, a friend of Dr. Franklin received an anonymous letter in cipher, dated May 15th, containing a caution to him to be on his guard from another quarter. The writer said: "Mr. Hartley told Lord Camden this morning that he was sure the Commissioners, and particularly Dr. Franklin, were much disconcerted at Paris; for they might as well live in the Bastile, as be exposed, as they were, to the perpetual observation of French ministerial spies. This must not, however, be repeated."

In reply Dr. Franklin said: "Be so good as to answer our friend, that it is impossible Mr. Hartley could have said what is here represented, no such thing having ever been intimated to him; nor has the least idea of the kind ever been in the minds of the Commissioners, particularly Dr. Franklin, who does not care how many spies are placed about him by the Court of France, having nothing to conceal from them."—EDITOR.

grant some superior advantages in trade to Britain, and enter into an alliance, offensive and defensive; whether, if war should be declared against France, we had obliged ourselves by treaty to join with her against England.

My answers have been that the United States were not fond of war, and with the advice of their friends would probably be easily prevailed with to make peace on equitable terms; but we had no terms committed to us to propose, and I did not choose to mention any; that Britain, having injured us heavily by making this unjust war upon us, might think herself well off, if *on reparation of those injuries* we admitted her to *equal* advantages with other nations in commerce, but certainly she had no reason to expect *superior;* that her known fondness for war, and the many instances of her readiness to engage in wars on frivolous occasions, were probably sufficient to cause an immediate rejection of every proposition for an *offensive* alliance with her; and that, if she made war against France on our account, a peace with us, at the same time, was impossible; for that, having met with friendship from that generous nation, when we were cruelly oppressed by England, we were under ties stronger than treaties could form, to make common cause; which we should certainly do to the utmost of our power.

Here has also been with me a Mr. Chapman, who says he is a member of the Parliament of Ireland, on his way home from Nice, where he had been for the recovery of his health. He pretended to call on me only from motives of respect for my character,

etc. But, after a few compliments, he entered on a similar discourse, urging much to know what terms would satisfy America, and whether, on having *peace and independence granted* to us, we should not be willing to submit to the Navigation Act, or give equivalent privileges in trade to Britain. The purport of my answer to him was, in short, that peace was of equal value to England as to us, and independence we were already in possession of; that, therefore, England's offer to grant them to us could not be considered as proposing any favor, or as giving her a right to expect peculiar advantages in commerce. By his importunity, I found his visit was not so occasional as he represented it; and, from some expressions, I conjectured he might be sent by Lord Shelburne to sound me and collect some information. On the whole, I gather from these conversations that the opposition, as well as the ministry, are perplexed with the present situation of affairs, and know not which way to turn themselves, or whether it is best to go backward or forward, or what steps to take to extricate that nation from its present dangerous situation.

I thought it right to give your Excellency an account of these interviews, and to acquaint you with my intention of avoiding such hereafter; as I see but little prospect of utility in them, and think they are very liable to hurtful misrepresentations.

By advices from London we learn that a fleet for Quebec, with goods valued at five hundred thousand pounds sterling, is to sail about the end of this month, under convoy only of a single frigate of thirty guns, in which is to go Governor Haldimand.

Enclosed I send a paper I have just received from London. It is not subscribed by any name, but I know the hand. It is from an old friend, of general and great acquaintance, and marks strongly the present distress and despair of considerate people in England. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your Excellency's, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCXCIX

### FROM THE COUNT DE VERGENNES

VERSAILLES, 25 April, 1778.

SIR:—I have made known to the king the substance of the letter which you did me the honor of writing to me yesterday; and I am directed by his Majesty to express to you the satisfaction he has experienced from the information, which you have communicated on your conferences with Mr. Hartley. The grand principle of the English policy has always been to excite divisions; and it is by such means she expects to sustain her empire; but it is not upon you, nor upon your colleagues, that she can practise such arts with success.

I entertain the same sentiments of confidence in the United States. As to the rest, it is impossible to speak with more dignity, frankness, and firmness than you have done to Mr. Hartley; he has no reason to be very well satisfied with his mission. I doubt whether this member of Parliament has any mission for us; but he desires to see me, and I expect him in the course of the morning. I should not be at all surprised, if his purpose be to sow distrust between

us by proposing a double negotiation. That I can obviate; but whatever passes between us, however trifling it may be, you shall be made acquainted with. I have the honor to be, with the most perfect consideration, sir, etc., DE VERGENNES.

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## DCC

### TO MR. JN. ROSS[1]

PASSY, 26 April, 1778.

SIR:—The multiplicity of affairs we have lately been engaged in, together with Mr. Deane's departure, who used to correspond with you, occasioned a deficiency in answering your letters. On looking them over I find some reflections on the Commissioners as having acted an ingenious part relative to the papers left by Mr. Thomas Morris. It appears that you have not been well informed; and therefore I would now give you the history of the transaction.

On the death of Mr. Morris, it was represented to the Commissioners that, on pretence of some kind of partnership between him and Mr. Penet, that gentleman might probably get possession of the papers, which would be attended with great inconvenience in case of any dispute on a settlement of the public accounts; and that, therefore, to prevent this, it was necessary Mr. W. Lee, the surviving colleague, should go down and take them into his custody, but, to enable him to do that, an order from government here should be obtained, directing the public officers

[1] Endorsed: Letter to Mr. Jn. Ross, April 26, '78; not sent until May 19, '78.

in whose hands they regularly were, to deliver them to him; and the memorial requesting such an order was brought to Mr. Deane and me, ready drawn by Mr. A. Lee, to be signed, which we did without hesitation; I, for my part, not having the least doubt that, on receiving them, he would deliver to you those belonging to the affairs of Willing & Morris. When he returned, he gave it as the reason of his not doing so that you had quarrelled with him, used him rudely, denied his authority to meddle with the public papers, and required the whole to be delivered to you; on which he had brought the trunk containing them up to Paris as he received it, sealed by two gentlemen of credit; and he desired that, to prevent reflections or suspicions, it might be opened and the papers divided in our presence. We consented to this; and I went to his house for that purpose, where Mr. Izard attended to verify the seals of the two gentlemen that were on the trunk. But, Mr. Deane being hindered from attending by an accident, the business was postponed; and, as I soon after understood by your letters, that Mr. Lee had had the papers under his particular examination several days before that formal sealing, of which I therefore did not see the use, and apprehending some danger of being involved in your quarrel, I refused, on consideration, to have any thing to do with the opening and sorting of the papers. Mr. Lee was about to set out for Germany, and intimated that our not doing this must stop his journey. To remove this obstacle, as Mr. Deane was going to America, and Mr. A. Lee might soon go to Spain, I let him know that if he chose to leave the trunk

sealed in my care, to be delivered in the same state to him or his order, I would consent to take it. He accordingly brought it to my house, with a receipt to that purpose ready written for me to sign. I signed it accordingly, and thought that might have been sufficient; but, so cautious is he, that, lest I should deny my handwriting (I suppose this reason because I cannot conceive another), he desired four persons to put their hands to the receipt as witnesses. He has, indeed, excused this since, by saying that he meant only to have it appear that those gentlemen being present approved of his delivery of the trunk to me. This might do for two of them, Mr. Deane and his brother, who, being Commissioners that with me procured for him the power of taking possession of them, had, therefore, some right to give their approbation; but the two others, Mr. Izard and Mr. Pringle, had no concern in the affair. Thus you see how the trunk comes to be in my hands, and yet not in my disposition. It is said to contain Mr. Morris' papers. I know nothing of the contents, and can know nothing of them, being obliged to deliver the trunk sealed as I received it, and I refused to take the key; and, apprehending Mr. Lee to be a very artful as well as disputatious man, I now wish I had not even consented to receive it. You see here the innocent part Mr. Deane and I have had in this affair, yet Mr. Lee has reflected upon us in one of his letters to me as countenancing you in treating him ill at Nantes; and you affront us as having given him our sanction for inspecting and carrying off the papers belonging to the house of Willing & Morris,

but nothing is more common than to pass censures without knowing facts.

Mr. William Lee, in some conversation, expressed his opinion that a power to receive the papers ought to come from Mr. Morris' legal representative, otherwise he could not deliver them. I mention this for your information, as I suppose he will deliver them to no other person, for he is much of a lawyer, and would do every thing regularly. I am, sir, your most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCI

### TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 17 May, 1778.

Mr. Franklin is not inclined to sign this letter to Mr. Grand: [1]

1. Because he does not know that any inconveniences have arisen from the order originally given, that the orders of each of us separately should be honored.

2. Because Mr. Lee is pleased to be very angry with him, which is expressed in many of his letters, and therefore Mr. Franklin does not choose to be obliged to ask Mr. Lee's consent, whenever he may have

[1] The following is a copy of the letter to Mr. Grand, the American banker, which Mr. Lee requested Dr. Franklin to sign:

"SIR:—It is our desire that you accept no bills nor pay any money out of the funds, which are or may be in your hands to the credit of us three jointly, without our joint order. As it has been the practice to address letters upon the business of the Commission to Mr. Deane, we desire that you will send to us all the letters you receive so directed, and not give them to any private person."

occasion to draw for his subsistence, as that consent cannot be expected from any necessity of a reciprocal compliance on Mr. Franklin's part, Mr. Lee having secured his subsistence by taking into his own possession one hundred and eighty-five thousand livres, and his brother, by a deception on the Commissioners, of forty-eight thousand.[1] Mr. Franklin has no objection to any resolution, that all contracts for the public shall be made by joint consent, or at least by a majority, together with the drafts for payment. Indeed, he wishes that, if practicable, he might be excused from any concern in matters of commerce, which he so little understands. But, as we are separately accountable to Congress for our personal expenses, and Mr. Franklin does not desire to have the least control in those of his colleagues, so neither does he choose to subject his to the control of Mr. Lee.

3. He declines signing this letter, because it orders Mr. Grand to deliver to us all letters directed to Mr. Deane, which may come into his hands; and, it being understood that Dr. Bancroft is intrusted and empowered by Mr. Deane to receive his letters, and there may be some concerning his private affairs, with which we have no concern, and which it may be improper for us to examine, Mr. Franklin thinks that the supposition of a possibility, that they may relate to the public, is not sufficient excuse for such gratification of private curiosity. I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

[1] This "deception," as it is here called, is explained in the letter to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, dated January 15, 1779.

## DCCII

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 25 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I am glad to learn by the newspapers that you got safe home, where I hope you found all well.

I wish to know whether your ministers have yet come to a resolution to exchange the prisoners they hold in England, according to the expectations formerly given you. We have here above two hundred, who are confined in the *Drake*, where they must be kept, as we have not the use of prisons on shore, and where they cannot be so conveniently accommodated as we could wish. But as the liberal discharge we have given to near five hundred prisoners taken on your coasts has wrought no disposition to similar returns, we shall keep these and all we take hereafter, till your counsels become more reasonable. We have accounts from the Mill Prison at Plymouth, that our people are not allowed the use of pen and ink, nor the sight of a newspaper, nor the conversation of friends. Is it true?

Be so good as to mention to me whether the two little bills I gave you on Nesbit and Vaughn are accepted and paid, and the sums of each, as I have omitted to make a note of them. Permit me to repeat my thankful acknowledgments for the very humane and kind part you have acted in this affair. If I thought it necessary I would pray God to bless you for it. But I know he will do so without my prayers. Adieu, and believe me ever etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCCIII

### TO JOHN PAUL JONES

PASSY, 27 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I received yours of the 18th, enclosing one for the Countess of Selkirk, which I forward this day by way of Holland, as you desire. It is a gallant letter, and must give her Ladyship a high and just opinion of your generosity and nobleness of mind.

The Jersey privateers do us a great deal of mischief by intercepting our supplies. It has been mentioned to me, that your small vessel, commanded by so brave an officer, might render great service by following them where greater ships dare not venture their bottoms; or, being accompanied and supported by some frigates from Brest, at a proper distance, might draw them out, and then take them. I wish you to consider of this, as it comes from high authority, and that you would immediately let me know what you think of it, and when your ship will be ready.

I have written to England about the exchange of your prisoners. I congratulate you most cordially on your late success, and wish for a continuance and increase of the honor you have acquired. It will always be a pleasure to me to contribute what may lie in my power towards your advancement, and that of the brave officers and men under your command. I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCCIV

### TO JOHN PAUL JONES

PASSY, 1 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I have the pleasure of informing you that it is proposed to give you the command of the great ship we have built at Amsterdam. By what you wrote to us formerly, I have ventured to say in your behalf, that this proposition would be agreeable to you. You will immediately let me know your resolution; which, that you may be more clear in taking, I must inform you of some circumstances. She is at present the property of the king; but, as there is no war yet declared, you will have the commission and flag of the United States, and act under their orders and laws. The *Prince de Nassau* will make the cruise with you. She is to be brought here under cover of a French merchantman, to be equipped and manned in France. We hope to exchange your prisoners for as many American sailors; but, if that fails, you have your present crew to be made up here with other nations and French.

The other Commissioners are not acquainted with this proposition as yet, and you see, by the nature of it, that it is necessary to be kept a secret, till we have got the vessel here, for fear of difficulties in Holland, and interruption. You will therefore direct your answer to me alone, it being desired that, at present, the affair rest between you and me. Perhaps it may be best for you to take a trip up here to concert matters, if in general you approve the idea.

I was much pleased with reading your journal, which we received yesterday. I am, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

## DCCV

### TO JOHN PAUL JONES

PASSY, 10 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I received yours of the 1st instant with the papers enclosed, which I have shown to the other Commissioners; but have not yet had their opinion of them. I only know that they had before (in consideration of the disposition and uneasiness of your people) expressed an inclination to order your ship directly back to America. You will judge from what follows, whether it would not be advisable *for you to propose* their sending her back with her people, and under some other command.

In consequence of the high opinion the Minister of the Marine has of your conduct and bravery, it is now settled (observe, that this is to be a secret between us, I being expressly enjoined not to communicate it to any other person, not even to the other gentlemen) that you are to have the frigate from Holland, which actually belongs to government, and will be furnished with as many good French seamen as you shall require. But you are to act under Congress' commission. As you may like to have a number of Americans, and your own are homesick, it is proposed to give you as many as you can engage out of two hundred prisoners, which the ministry of Britain have at length agreed to give us in exchange for those you have in your hands. They propose to make the exchange at Calais, where they are to bring the Americans. Nothing is wanting to this, but a list of yours, containing their names and rank;

immediately on the receipt of which, an equal number are to be prepared and sent in a ship to that port, where yours are to meet them. Pray send this list by the return of the post if possible. If by this means you can get a good new crew, I think it will be best that you are quite free of the old, for a mixture might introduce the infection of that sickness you complain of. But this may be left to your discretion.

Perhaps we shall join with you the *Providence*, Captain Whipple, a new Continental ship of thirty guns, which, in coming out of the river of Providence, gave the two frigates that were posted to intercept her each of them so heavy a dose of her eighteen and twelve-pounders, that they had not the courage, or were not able, to pursue her. The *Boston* is supposed to be gone from Bordeaux.

It seems to be desired that you should step up to Versailles (where one will meet you), in order to such a settlement of matters and plans with those who have the direction, as cannot well be done by letter. I wish it may be convenient to you to do it directly. The project of giving you the command of this ship pleases me the more, as it is a probable opening to the higher preferment you so justly merit. I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCVI

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 16 June, 1778.

SIR:—I received yours of the 5th inst. acquainting us that the ministry have at length agreed to an

exchange of prisoners. We shall write Captain Jones for the list required, which will be sent you as soon as received. We understand there are at least two hundred. We desire and expect that the number of ours shall be taken from Forton and Plymouth, in proportion to the number in each place, and to consist of those who have been longest in confinement, it being not only equitable that they should be first, but this method will prevent all suspicions that you pick out the worst and weakest of our people, to give in exchange for your good ones. If you think proper to clear your prisoners at once, and give us all our people, we give you our solemn engagement, which we are sure will be punctually executed, to deliver to Lord Howe in America, or to his order, a number of your sailors equal to the surplus, as soon as the agreement arrives there.

There is one thing more which we desire may be observed. We shall note in our lists the names and number of those in the service of the king, distinguishing them from those taken in the merchants' service; that in the exchange to be made you may give adequate number of those in the service of the States, and of our merchants. This will prevent any uneasiness among your navy men and ours, if the seamen of merchantmen are exchanged before them. As it will be very troublesome and expensive, as well as fatiguing to them, to march our people from Brest to Calais, we may endeavor to get leave for your ship to come to the road of Brest to receive them there; or, if that cannot be, we must desire from your Admiralty a passport for the ship that is to

convey them from Brest to Calais. If you have any of our people still prisoners on board your ships of war, we request they may be put into the prisons, to take their chance of exchange with the rest.

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## DCCVII

### TO JAMES HUTTON

PASSY, 23 June, 1778.

My dear old friend has here the paper he desired.[1] We have had a marble monument made at Paris for the brave General Montgomery, which is gone to America. If it should fall into the hands of any of your cruisers, I expect you will exert yourself to get it restored to us, because I know the generosity of your temper, which likes to do handsome things as well as to make returns. You see we are unwilling to *rob the hospital;* we hope your people will be found as averse to *pillaging the dead.* Adieu. Yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCVIII

### TO AN ENGRAVER IN PARIS

PASSY, 24 June, 1778.

SIR:—On reading again the prospectus and explanation of your intended print, I find the whole merit of giving freedom to America continues to be ascribed to me, which, as I told you in our first conversation, I could by no means approve of, as it would be unjust to the numbers of wise and brave

[1] Passport for a vessel which was about to be sent to the Moravian missionaries on the coast of Labrador. See *infra*, March 10, 1779.

men who, by their arms and counsels, have shared in the enterprise, and contributed to its success (as far as it has yet succeeded), at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.

My proposition to you was, and continues to be, that, instead of naming me in particular in the explanation of the print, it should be said: "*The Congress, represented by a senator in Roman dress, etc.*" As it stands, I cannot consent to accept the honor you propose to do me by dedicating the print to me, which, I understand, is in this country considered as an approbation; and in my own country it would hurt my character and usefulness, if I were to give the least countenance to such a pretension by recommending or proposing the sale of a print so explained. Upon these considerations I must request that, if you are determined to proceed in the engraving, you would in a new prospectus change the explanation as above proposed, and dedicate the print, not to me, but to the Congress. I have the honor to be, sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCIX

### PROPOSED LETTER TO LORD NORTH [1] CONCERNING PRISONERS

June, 1778.

MY LORD:—The fortune of war having again made a number of British seamen prisoners to the United States, it is our duty to trouble you with a renewal of our former request for an immediate exchange of prisoners in Europe. To detain unfortunate

[1] Not sent.

men for months in prison and send them three thousand miles to make an exchange which might take place immediately and on the spot, is a most grievous and unnecessary addition to the calamities of war, in which we cannot believe the British government will persist.

It is with the utmost regret that we find ourselves compelled to reiterate to your Lordship our remonstrances against your treating the citizens of the United States, made prisoners by the arms of the king of Great Britain, in a manner unexampled in the practice of civilized nations. We have received late and authentic information that numbers of such prisoners, some of them fathers of families in America having been sent to Africa, are now in the fort of Senegal, condemned in that unwholesome climate to the hardest labor and most inhuman treatment.

It will be our indispensable duty to report this to the Congress of the United States, and retaliation will be the inevitable consequence in Europe as well as in America, unless your Lordship will authorize us to assure Congress that those unhappy men, as well as all others of our nation who have been treated in a similar manner shall be immediately brought back and exchanged.

Most earnestly we beseech your Lordship no longer to sacrifice the essential interests of humanity to claims of sovereignty,[1] [of which the issue of our most solemn appeal to Heaven has sufficiently proved. It is a fatal mistake, by which you seem to have been misled, to think that when you tram-

[1] The lines in brackets are struck out in draft.

pled upon humanity you triumphed too over us] which your experience must by this time have convinced you are not to be maintained.

We have the honor to be, etc.

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## DCCX

### TO CHARLES DE WEISSENSTEIN [1]

PASSY, 1 July, 1778.

SIR:—I received your letter, dated at Brussels the 16th past. My vanity might possibly be flattered by your expressions of compliment to my understanding,

[1] Dr. Franklin received a long letter from a man who signed himself *Charles de Weissenstein*. The letter was dated "Brussels, June 16, 1778," and written in English. The writer was evidently a secret agent from England, instructed to procure from Dr. Franklin some kind of propositions for a peace. The name was doubtless assumed; and although the letter was dated at Brussels, it was probably written in Paris.

The contents of the letter, considering the source in which it must have originated, are curious and remarkable. The writer begins by urging the impossibility that England should ever acknowledge the independence of the colonies, and the certainty that France would deceive and betray them. He, moreover, adds that in case Parliament should be induced to acknowledge their independence, the people of England would not approve it, and posterity would never submit to it. "Our title to the empire," said he, "is indisputable; it will be asserted, either by ourselves or successors, whenever occasion presents. We may stop awhile in our pursuit to recover breath, but shall assuredly resume our career again."

He then proceeds at much length to state a *Plan of Reconciliation*, and the *Outline of the Future Government in America*. In the *Plan* is the following extraordinary article: "As the conspicuous public part which some American gentlemen have taken may expose them to the personal enmity of some of the chief persons in Great Britain; and as it is unreasonable that their services to their country should deprive them of those advantages which their talents would otherwise have gained them, the following persons shall have *offices* or *pensions for life*, at their option, namely, Franklin, Washington, Adams, Hancock,

if your *proposals* did not more clearly manifest a mean opinion of it.

You conjure me, in the name of the omniscient and just God, before whom I must appear, and by my hopes of future fame, to consider if some expedient cannot be found to put a stop to the desolation of America, and prevent the miseries of a general war. As I am conscious of having taken every step in my power to prevent the breach, and no one to widen it, I can appear cheerfully before that God, fearing nothing from his justice in this particular though I have much occasion for his mercy in many others. As to my future fame, I am content to rest it on my past and present conduct, without seeking

etc., etc. In case his Majesty or his successors should ever create American peers, then these persons or their descendants shall be among the first created, if they choose it, Mr. Washington to have immediately a brevet of lieutenant-general, and all the honors and precedence incident thereto, but not to assume or bear any command without a special warrant or letter of service for that purpose from the king."

In the *Outlines of Government* it is provided that each colony shall choose its own form, and have legislatures, but that all officers must swear allegiance to the crown and Parliament of Great Britain; that no American shall enjoy any office of trust or profit in Great Britain without a special act of Parliament for that purpose; in every other respect they are to enjoy the privileges of natural-born Englishmen; that "the judges of the courts shall be named by the king, and hold their offices for life, and shall either bear titles as peers of America or otherwise, as shall be decided by his Majesty; that a Congress shall assemble once in seven years, or oftener, if his Majesty thinks fit to summon it, but all its proceedings are to be transmitted to the British Parliament, without whose consent no money shall ever be granted by Congress or any separate State to the Crown; that the great offices of state shall be named in the compact, and that America shall provide for them; that the whole naval and military force shall be directed by his Majesty; that the British Parliament shall fix the naval and military force, and vote the sums necessary for its main-

an addition to it in the crooked, dark paths you propose to me, where I should most certainly lose it. This your solemn address would therefore have been more properly made to your sovereign and his venal Parliament. He and they, who wickedly began, and madly continue, a war for the desolation of America, are alone accountable for the consequences.

You endeavor to impress me with a bad opinion of French faith; but the instances of their friendly endeavors to serve a race of weak princes, who, by their own imprudence, defeated every attempt to promote their interest, weigh but little with me, when I consider the steady friendship of France to the Thirteen United States of Switzerland, which has

tenance, both by sea and land, and make laws for its regulation; that a tariff of duties shall be fixed, which shall not be changed without the mutual consent of both the Parliament of Great Britain and the colony where the change is intended to be made; that British manufactures shall always have the preference over those of other nations, and that no new taxes shall ever be imposed on them without the previous consent of the Parliament of Great Britain."

Such are some of the features of the scheme proposed by this private agent. Dr. Franklin understood it to proceed from high authority, and framed his answer accordingly. He sent the agent's letter to the Count de Vergennes, with a copy of his answer. They are now in the *Archives des Affaires Etrangères* in Paris, where the above abstract was taken from the original, and where also a copy of Dr. Franklin's answer was obtained by Mr. Sparks. John Adams in his "Diary" says the reply was submitted to the Count de Vergennes, but was never sent to Weissenstein. On the day, hour, and place appointed to meet the messenger for a conference, the police reported the appearance of a man, who walked about the place for a couple of hours, always keeping the place of rendezvous in sight, and then disappeared. Adams says they decided that the whole matter was too futile to be worth reporting to Congress. For the same reason, possibly, the answer of Franklin was not sent to Weissenstein. It was fortunate that this futility was not discovered until after Franklin's letter was written.—EDITOR.

now continued inviolate two hundred years. You tell me that she will certainly cheat us, and that she despises us already. I do not believe that she will cheat us, and I am not certain that she despises us; but I see clearly that you are endeavoring to cheat us by your conciliatory bills; that you actually despised our understandings, when you flattered yourselves those artifices would succeed; and that not only France, but all Europe, yourselves included, most certainly and for ever would despise us, if we were weak enough to accept your insidious propositions.

Our expectations of the future grandeur of America are not so magnificent, and therefore not so vain or visionary, as you represent them to be. The body of our people are not merchants, but humble husbandmen, who delight in the cultivation of their lands, which, from their fertility and the variety of our climates, are capable of furnishing all the necessaries and conveniences of life without external commerce; and we have too much land to have the least temptation to extend our territory by conquest from peaceable neighbors, as well as too much justice to think of it. Our militia, you find by experience, are sufficient to defend our lands from invasion; and the commerce with us will be defended by all the nations who find an advantage in it. We, therefore, have not the occasion you imagine, of fleets or standing armies, but may leave those expensive machines to be maintained for the pomp of princes, and the wealth of ancient states. We propose, if possible, to live in peace with all mankind;

and after you have been convinced, to your cost, that there is nothing to be got by attacking us, we have reason to hope that no other power will judge it prudent to quarrel with us, lest they divert us from our own quiet industry, and turn us into corsairs preying upon theirs. The weight, therefore, of an independent empire, which you seem certain of our inability to bear, will not be so great as you imagine. The expense of our civil government we have always borne, and can easily bear, because it is small. A virtuous and laborious people may be cheaply governed. Determining, as we do, to have no offices of profit, nor any sinecures or useless appointments, so common in ancient or corrupted states, we can govern ourselves a year for the sum you pay in a single department, or for what one jobbing contractor, by the favor of a minister, can cheat you out of in a single article.

You think we flatter ourselves and are deceived into an opinion that England *must* acknowledge our independency. We, on the other hand, think you flatter yourselves in imagining such an acknowledgment a vast boon, which we strongly desire, and which you may gain some great advantage by granting or withholding. We have never asked it of you; we only tell you that you can have no treaty with us but as an independent state; and you may please yourselves and your children with the rattle of your right to govern us, as long as you have done with that of your king's being king of France, without giving us the least concern, if you do not attempt to exercise it. That this pretended right is indisputable,

as you say, we utterly deny. Your Parliament never had a right to govern us, and your king has forfeited it by his bloody tyranny. But I thank you for letting me know a little of your mind, that, even if the Parliament should acknowledge our independency, the act would not be binding to posterity, and that your nation would resume and prosecute the claim as soon as they found it convenient from the influence of your passions, and your present malice against us. We suspected before that you would not be actually bound by your conciliatory acts, longer than till they had served their purpose of inducing us to disband our forces; but we were not certain that you were knaves by principle, and that we ought not to have the least confidence in your offers, promises, or treaties, though confirmed by Parliament.

I now indeed recollect my being informed, long since, when in England, that a certain very great personage, then young, studied much a certain book called "Arcana Imperii." I had the curiosity to procure the book and read it. There are sensible and good things in it, but some bad ones; for, if I remember rightly, a particular king is applauded for his politically exciting a rebellion among his subjects, at a time when they had not strength to support it, that he might, in subduing them, take away their privileges, which were troublesome to him; and a question is formally stated and discussed, *Whether a prince, who, to appease a revolt, makes promise of indemnity to the revolters, is obliged to fulfil those promises.* Honest and good men would say, Ay; but this

politician says, as you say, No. And he gives this pretty reason, that, though it was right to make the promises, because otherwise the revolt would not be suppressed, yet it would be wrong to keep them, because revolters ought to be punished to deter from future revolts.

If these are the principles of your nation, no confidence can be placed in you; it is in vain to treat with you; and the wars can only end in being reduced to an utter inability of continuing them.

One main drift of your letter seems to be to impress me with an idea of your own impartiality, by just censures of your ministers and measures, and to draw from me propositions of peace, or approbation of those you have enclosed to me, which you intimate may by your means be conveyed to the king directly, without the intervention of those ministers. You would have me give them to, or drop them for, a stranger, whom I may find next Monday in the church of Notre Dame, to be known by a rose in his hat. You yourself, sir, are quite unknown to me; you have not trusted me with your true name. Our taking the least step towards a treaty with England through you, might, if you are an enemy, be made use of to ruin us with our new and good friends. I may be indiscreet enough in many things; but certainly, if I were disposed to make propositions (which I cannot do, having none committed to me to make), I should never think of delivering them to the Lord knows who, to be carried to the Lord knows where, to serve no one knows what purposes. Being at this time one of the most remarkable figures in

Paris, even my appearance in the church of Notre Dame, where I cannot have any conceivable business, and especially being seen to leave or drop any letter to any person there, would be a matter of some speculation, and might, from the suspicions it must naturally give, have very mischievous consequences to our credit here.

The very proposing of a correspondence so to be managed, in a manner not necessary where fair dealing is intended, gives just reason to suppose you intend the contrary. Besides, as your court has sent Commissioners to treat with the Congress, with all the powers that could be given them by the crown under the act of Parliament, what good purpose can be served by privately obtaining propositions from us? Before those Commissioners went, we might have treated in virtue of our general powers (with the knowledge, advice, and approbation of our friends), upon any propositions made to us. But, under the present circumstances, for us to make propositions, while a treaty is supposed to be actually on foot with the Congress, would be extremely improper, highly presumptuous with regard to our constituents, and answer no good end whatever.

I write this letter to you, notwithstanding; (which I think I can convey in a less mysterious manner, and guess it may come to your hands;) I write it because I would let you know our sense of your procedure which appears as insidious as that of your conciliatory bills. Your true way to obtain peace, if your ministers desire it, is to propose openly to the Congress fair and equal terms, and you may possibly

come sooner to such a resolution, when you find that personal flatteries, general cajolings, and panegyrics on our *virtue* and *wisdom* are not likely to have the effect you seem to expect; the persuading us to act basely and foolishly, in betraying our country and posterity into the hands of our most bitter enemies, giving up or selling our arms and warlike stores, dismissing our ships of war and troops, and putting those enemies in possession of our forts and ports.

This proposition of delivering ourselves, bound and gagged, ready for hanging, without even a right to complain, and without a friend to be found afterwards among all mankind, you would have us embrace upon the faith of an act of Parliament! Good God! an act of your Parliament! This demonstrates that you do not yet know us, and that you fancy we do not know you; but it is not merely this flimsy faith that we are to act upon; you offer us *hope*, the hope of PLACES, PENSIONS, and PEERAGES. These, judging from yourselves, you think are motives irresistible. This offer to corrupt us, sir, is with me your credential, and convinces me that you are not a private volunteer in your application. It bears the stamp of British court character. It is even the signature of your king. But think for a moment in what light it must be viewed in America. By PLACES, you mean places among us, for you take care by a special article to secure your own to yourselves. We must then pay the salaries in order to enrich ourselves with these places. But you will give us PENSIONS, probably to be paid too out of your expected American revenue, and which none

of us can accept without deserving, and perhaps obtaining, a SUS-*pension*. PEERAGES! alas! sir, our long observation of the vast servile majority of your peers, voting constantly for every measure proposed by a minister, however weak or wicked, leaves us small respect for that title. We consider it as a sort of *tar-and-feather* honor, or a mixture of foulness and folly, which every man among us, who should accept it from your king would be obliged to renounce, or exchange for that conferred by the mobs of their own country, or wear it with everlasting infamy. I am, sir, your humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCXI

### TO MR. GRAND

3 July, 1778.

Mr. Franklin presents his respects to Mr. Grand, and sends him the original letter of which he has spoken. In another, Mr. Bingham says that the slightest pretext suffices nowadays for the English to seize and condemn goods of French merchants, who cannot even transport the products of America from one island to another without running the greatest risks. In effect, many ships have been taken lately into Dominique for the sole reason that they were the productions of America.

It is to be remarked that before these difficulties the French merchants could purchase tobacco, rice, etc., from the Americans of the continent, to be taken into France. If I am not mistaken, it is

provided in the treaties that the ship of a friend protects the merchandise even of an enemy, much more ought it to guarantee your own merchandise previously purchased from this enemy.

Mr. Bingham also says that the Court of Admiralty at Dominique is constituted on such iniquitous principles that it encourages condemnations, the judges receiving a portion of the condemned merchandise, so that one can hardly hope to save his property, the fate of which depends upon their judgment.

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## DCCXII

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 13 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—Enclosed is the list of our prisoners, which by an accident was long in coming to us. There are supposed to be about fifteen more remaining in the hospital, whose names we have not yet obtained, and about as many who being recovered of their wounds have been suffered to go home to England. If you continue in the opinion of making the exchange at Calais, you will send us the papers necessary to secure the vessel that shall transport the men from the ports where they are to that place against capture; as the marching them thither would be attended with great inconveniences, and many of them might desert on the way, from an apprehension of being put on board men-of-war on their arrival in England.

## DCCXIII

### TO JAMES LOVELL

PASSY, 22 July, 1778.

SIR:—I received your favor of May 15th, and was glad to find that mine of December 25th had come to hand. Mr. Deane's brother writes it was not signed, which was an accidental omission. Mr. Deane is himself, I hope, with you long before this time, and I doubt not every prejudice against him is removed. It was not alone upon the proceedings of Congress that I formed my opinion that such prejudices existed. I am glad to understand that opinion was groundless, and that he is likely to come back with honor in the commission to Holland, where matters are already so ripe for his operations that he cannot fail (with his abilities) of being useful.

You mention former letters of the Committee, by which we might have seen the apprehensions of the resentment of foreign officers, etc. Those letters never came to hand. And we, on our part, are amazed to hear that the Committee had had no line from us for near a year, during which we had written, I believe, five or six long and particular letters, and had made it a rule to send triplicates of each, and to replace those that we happened to hear were lost, so that of some there were five copies sent; and as I hear that Captain Young is arrived, who had some of them, I think it probable that one of each, at least, must have come to your hands before this time. Mr. Deane's information, however, may supply the want

of them, whose arrival, as he went with a strong squadron of men-of-war, is more likely than that of this vessel, or any other single one by which we might send more copies.

The affair with M. de Beaumarchais will be best settled by his assistance after his return. We find it recommended to us, but we know too little of it to be able to do it well without him.

There has been some inaccuracy in sending us the last despatches of the Committee. Two copies of the contract with M. Francy, and the invoices, came by the same vessel, Captain Niles. And though one of your letters mentions sending enclosed a resolution of Congress relative to two articles of the treaty, that resolution is not come to hand. There are circumstances in the affair of those articles that make them, in my opinion, of no consequence if they stand, while the proposing to abrogate them has an unpleasing appearance, as it looks like a desire of having it in our power to make that commercial kind of war, which no honest state can begin, which no good friend or neighbor ever did or will begin, which has always been considered as an act of hostility that provoked as well as justified reprisals, and has generally produced such as rendered the first project as unprofitable as it was unjust.

Commerce among nations, as well as between private persons, should be fair and equitable, by equivalent exchanges and mutual supplies. The taking of unfair advantages of a neighbor's necessities, though attended with temporary success, always breeds bad blood. To lay duties on a commodity exported,

which our neighbors want, is a knavish attempt to get something for nothing. The statesman who first invented it had the genius of a pickpocket, and would have been a pickpocket if fortune had suitably placed him. The nations, who have practised it have suffered fourfold, as pickpockets ought to suffer. Savoy, by a duty on exported wines, lost the trade of Switzerland, which thenceforth raised its own wine; and (to waive other instances) Britain, by her duty on exported tea, has lost the trade of her colonies. But, as we produce no commodity that is peculiar to our country, and which may not be obtained elsewhere, the discouraging the consumption of ours by duties on exportation, and thereby encouraging a rivalship from other nations in the ports we trade to, is absolute folly, which, indeed, is mixed, more or less with all knavery. For my own part, if my protest were of any consequence, I should protest against our ever doing it, even by way of reprisal. It is a meanness with which I would not dirty the conscience or character of my country.

The objections stated against the last of the two articles had all been made and considered here; and were sent, I imagine, from hence, by one who is offended that they were not thought of weight sufficient to stop the signing of the treaty till the king should, in another council, reconsider those articles, and, after agreeing to omit them, order new copies to be drawn, though all was then ready engrossed on parchment as before settled. I did not think the articles of much consequence; but I thought it of consequence that no delay should be given to the signing

of the treaty after it was ready. But, if I had known that those objections would have been sent to the Committee, I should have sent the answers they received, which had been satisfactory to *all* the Commissioners, when the treaty was settled, and until the mind of one [1] of them was altered by the opinion of two other persons.[2] It is now too late to send those answers. But I wish, for the future, if such a case should again happen, that Congress would acquaint their Commissioners with such partial objections, and hear their reasons before they determine that they have done wrong. In the meantime this only to you in private; it will be of no use to communicate it, as the resolutions of Congress will probably be received and executed before this letter comes to hand.

Speaking of Commissioners in the plural, puts me in mind of inquiring, if it can be the intention of Congress to keep *three* Commissioners at this court; we have, indeed four with the gentleman intended for Tuscany, who continues here, and is very angry that he was not consulted in making the treaty, which he could have mended in several particulars; and perhaps he is angry with some reason, if the instructions to him do, as he says they do, require us to consult him. We shall soon have the fifth, for the envoy to Vienna, not being received there, is, I hear, returning hither. The necessary expense of maintaining us all is, I assure you, enormously great. I wish that the utility may equal it. I imagine every

[1] Arthur Lee.—See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. II., p. 127.
[2] Ralph Izard and William Lee.

one of us spends nearly as much as Lord Stormont did. It is true, he left behind him the character of a niggard; and, when the advertisement appeared for the sale of his household goods, all Paris laughed at an article of it, perhaps very innocently expressed: "*Une grande quantité du linge de table, qui n'a jamais servi.*" "*Cela est très vraisemblable,*" say they; "*car il n'a jamais donné à manger.*"

But, as to our number, whatever advantage there might be in the joint counsels of three for framing and adjusting the articles of the treaty, there can be none in managing the common business of a resident here. On the contrary, all the advantages in negotiation that result from secrecy of sentiment and uniformity in expressing it, and in common business from despatch, are lost. In a court, too, where every word is watched and weighed, if a number of Commissioners do not every one hold the same language in giving their opinion on any public transaction, this lessens their weight; and when it may be prudent to put on or avoid certain appearances of concern, for example, or indifference, satisfaction, or dislike, where the utmost sincerity and candor should be used and would gain credit, if no semblance of art showed itself in the inadvertent discourse, perhaps of only one of them, the hazard is in proportion to the number. And where every one must be consulted on every particular of common business, in answering every letter, etc., and one of them is offended if the smallest thing is done without his consent, the difficulty of being often and long enough together, the different opinions, and the time consumed in debating them,

the interruptions by new applicants in the time of meeting, etc., etc., occasion so much postponing and delay that correspondence languishes, occasions are lost, and the business is always behindhand.

I have mentioned the difficulty of being often and long enough together. This is considerable, where they cannot all be accommodated in the same house; but to find three people whose tempers are so good, and who like so well one another's company and manner of living and conversing as to agree well themselves, though being in one house, and whose servants will not by their indiscretion quarrel with one another, and by artful misrepresentations draw their masters in to take their parts, to the disturbance of necessary harmony, these are difficulties still greater and almost insurmountable. And, in consideration of the whole, I wish Congress would separate us.

The Spanish galleons, which have been impatiently expected, are at length happily arrived. The fleet and army returning from Brazil is still out, but supposed to be on the way homewards. When that and the South Sea ships are arrived, it will appear whether Spain's accession to the treaty has been delayed for the reasons given, or whether the reasons were only given to excuse the delay.

The English and French fleets, of nearly equal force, are now both at sea. It is not doubted but that, if they meet, there will be a battle; for, though England through fear affects to understand it to be still peace, and would excuse the depredations she has made on the commerce of France, by pretences

of illicit trade, etc., yet France considers the war begun, from the time of the king's message to Parliament, complaining of the insult France had given by treating with us, and demanding aids to resist it, and the answer of both houses, offering their lives and fortunes. These, and the taking several frigates, are deemed indisputable hostilities. Accordingly, orders are given to all the fleets and armed ships to return hostilities, and encouragement is offered to privateers, etc. An ambassador from Spain is indeed gone to London, and joyfully received there, in the idea that peace may be made by his mediation. But as yet we learn nothing certain of his mission, and doubt his effecting any thing of the kind.

War in Germany seems to be inevitable, and this occasioning great borrowings of money in Holland and elsewhere, by the powers concerned, makes it more difficult for us to succeed in ours. When we engaged to Congress to pay their bills for the interest of the sums they should borrow, we did not dream of their drawing on us for other occasions. We have already paid of Congress' drafts, to returned officers, eighty-two thousand two hundred and eleven livres, and we know not how much more of that kind we have to pay, because the Committee have never let us know the amount of those drafts, or their account of them never reached us, and they still continue coming in. And we are now surprised with advice of drafts from Mr. Bingham, to the amount of one hundred thousand more. If you reduce us to bankruptcy here, by a non-payment of your drafts, consider the consequences. In my humble opinion no

drafts should be made on us without first learning from us that we shall be able to answer them.

M. de Beaumarchais has been out of town ever since the arrival of your power to settle with him. I hope he will be able to furnish the supplies mentioned in the invoice and contract. The settlement may be much better made with the assistance of Mr. Deane, we being not privy to the transactions. We have agreed to give M. Dumas two hundred louis a year, thinking that he well deserves it. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCXIV

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 3 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I received duly your favors of July 14th and August 14th. I hoped to have answered them sooner by sending passport. Multiplicity of business has, I suppose, been the only occasion of delay in the ministers to consider of and make out the said passport.

I hope now soon to have it, as I do not find there is any objection made to it. In a former letter I proposed to you that the exchange would, in my opinion, be preferable at or near Brest, and I expected some time your answer on that point. But perhaps you have not received my letter; you say nothing of it.

I wish with you as much for the restoration of

peace, as we both formerly did for the continuance of it. But it must now be a peace of a different kind. I was fond to a folly of our British connections, and it was with infinite regret that I saw the necessity you would force us into of breaking it. But the extreme cruelty with which we have been treated has now extinguished every thought of returning to it, and separated us for ever. You have thereby lost limbs that will never grow again.

We, too, have suffered greatly, but our losses will soon be repaired by our good government, our industry, and the fertility of our country. And we now see the mischievous consequences of such a connection, and the danger of their being repeated if we should be weak enough to enter into it; we see this too plainly ever to listen in the least to any such proposition. We may therefore, with great propriety, take leave of you in those beautiful lines of Dante to the late mistress of his affection.

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## DCCXV

### TO JOHN PAUL JONES

PASSY, 6 September, 1778.

DEAR CAPTAIN:—I received your favors of the 24th and 31st of August. I am told, by M. de C——,[1] that M. de S——[2] is sorry you did not go with M. d'Orvilliers. He had sent orders for that purpose, and your staying at L'Orient occasioned your missing

[1] Probably de Chaumont. [2] Probably de Sartine.

the opportunity. Your letter was sent to the Prince de Nassau. I am confident something will be done for you, though I do not yet know what.

Dr. Bancroft has been indisposed, and I have not lately seen him; but I hear he is getting better, and suppose he has written. I go out of town early this morning for a few days, but the other Commissioners will answer your letter. I am glad you have procured a guard for the prisoners. It is a good piece of service. They have concluded in England to send us an equal number of ours, and we expect to-morrow to send the passport for their cartel ship, which is to bring them. If we are to deliver theirs at Calais, I should be for accepting thankfully the offer you mention.

We have no news from America, but what comes through England. Clinton's letter is in the *London Gazette*, and for style and coloring is so like Keppel's that I cannot help thinking neither of them originals, but both the performance of some under-secretary, whose business it is to cook the news for the ministers. Upon the whole, we learn that the English army was well worried in its march,[1] and that their whole fleet and forces are now blocked up in New York by Washington and Gates on the land side, and by Count d'Estaing by sea, and that they will soon be in want of provisions. I sympathize with you in what I know you must suffer from your present inactivity; but have patience. I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] The march across New Jersey to New York, after the evacuation of Philadelphia. During this march was fought the battle of Monmouth.

## DCCXVI

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 14 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I now send you the passport required. I postponed answering your last in hopes of obtaining it sooner, but though it was long since agreed to, much business in the Admiralty Department here has, I suppose, occasioned its delay. The port of Calais was not approved of, and I think the ports mentioned (Nantes or L'Orient) are better for you as well as for us, not only as being nearer to Plymouth, but as many of your sailors would probably have found opportunities of deserting in the long march from Brest to Calais, they being afraid of the press. I understand that upwards of eighty more of your people have been brought by ours prisoners into France since the list I sent you, but I cannot now send you their names. You have not mentioned whether the proposition of sending us the whole of those in your prisons was agreed to. If it is, you may rely on our sending immediately all that come to our hands for the future; or we will give you your option, an order for the balance to be delivered to your fleet in America. By putting a little confidence in one another, we may thus diminish the miseries of war. To make the expense of these exchanges more equal, if another cartel ship should hereafter be necessary, we hereby promise to send to England at our charge; and so it may continue to be done alternately as long as the war continues.

## DCCXVII

### FRANKLIN'S NOTES ON THE CONDITION OF HIS HEALTH FROM 1778-80

PASSY, 4 October, 1778. As my constitution appears to have undergone some considerable changes within the last three or four years, it may be of use to make some notes of the changes past, and to continue them, in order to ascertain what are hurtful or beneficial.

I had enjoyed continued health for nearly twenty years, except once in two or three years a slight fit of the gout, which generally terminated in a week or ten days, and once an intermitting fever, got from making experiments over stagnate waters.

I was sometimes vexed with an itching on the back, which I observed particularly after eating freely of beef. And sometimes after long confinement at writing, with little exercise, I have felt sudden pungent pains in the flesh of different parts of the body, which I was told was scorbutic. A journey used to free me of them.

In 1773, being in Ireland, I was, after a plentiful dinner of fish the first day of my arrival, seized with a violent vomiting and looseness. The latter continued, though more moderate, as long as I stayed in that kingdom, which was four or five weeks.

On my return I first observed a kind of scab or scurf on my head about the bigness of a shilling. Finding it did not heal, but rather increased, I mentioned it to my friend, Sir. J. P., who advised a

mercurial water to wash it, and some physic. It slowly left that place, but appeared in other parts of my head. He also advised my abstaining from salted meats and cheese, which advice I did not much follow, often forgetting it.

In 1775 I went to America. On the passage I necessarily ate more salt meat than usual with me at London. I immediately entered the Congress, where, and with the Committee of Safety, I sat great part of that year and the next, ten or twelve hours a day, without exercise. We lost three members in those years by apoplexies, viz.: Mr. Randolf, M. Bary, and Mr. Lynch. I had frequent giddinesses. I went to Canada. On the passage I suffered much from a number of large boils. In Canada my legs swelled, and I apprehended dropsy. Boils continued and harassed me after my return, but the swelling of my legs passed off. The boils, however, left round them a kind of dry scab or scurfiness, which being rubbed off appeared in the form of white bran. My giddiness left me.

In my passage to France, November, 1776, I lived chiefly on salt beef, the fowls being too hard for my teeth. But, being poorly nourished, I was very weak at my arrival; boils continued to vex me, and the scurf extending over all the small of my back, on my sides, my legs, and my arms, besides what continued under my hair, I applied to a physician, who ordered me Mr. Bellosto's pills and an infusion of a root called . I took the infusion awhile, but it being disagreeable, and finding no effect, I omitted it. I continued longer to take the pills, but finding

my teeth loosening, and that I had lost three, I desisted the use of them. I found that bathing stopped the progress of the disorder. I therefore took the hot bath twice a week, two hours at a time, till this last summer. It always made me feel comfortable as I rubbed off the softened scurf in the warm water; and I otherwise enjoyed exceeding good health.

I stated my case to Dr. Ingenhousz, and desired him to show it to Sir J. P. and obtain his advice. They sent me from London some medicine, but, Dr. Ingenhousz proposing to come over soon, and the affair not pressing, I resolved to omit taking the medicines till his arrival.

In July the disorder began to diminish, at first slowly, but afterwards rapidly; and by the beginning of October it had quitted entirely my legs, feet, thighs, and arms, and my belly; a very little was left on my sides, more on the small of my back, but the whole daily diminishing.

I observed that there was no redness under the scurf; if I took it once off it did not return. I had hardly bathed in those three months. I took no remedy whatever, and I know not what to ascribe the change to, unless it was the heat of the summer, which sometimes made me sweat, particularly when I exercised. I had five boils just before the amendment commenced, which discharged a great deal of matter. And once my legs began again to swell, but that went off in a few days, and I have been otherwise extremely well and hearty.

The second instant, October, I ate a hearty supper, much cheese, and drank a good deal of champagne.

The 3d, I ate no breakfast, but a hearty dinner, and at night found my back itch extremely, near the shoulders, which continues to-day, the 4th. I ate some salted beef at dinner yesterday, but not much. I wish the cool weather may not bring on a return of the disorder.

Oct. 4th. The itching continues, but somewhat abated.

Oct. 6th. Drank but one glass of wine to-day; the itching almost gone. I begin to think it will be better for me to abstain from wine. My dinner to-day was mutton, boiled, and fowl, with a good deal of fruit.

Oct. 12th. I have lately drank but little wine. The itching has not returned. The scurf continues to diminish. But yesterday I observed my ankles swelled. I suppose my having used no exercise lately may be the cause.

Jan. 14, 1779. The swelling above-mentioned continued some few weeks, being greatest at night; my complexion at the same time not fresh. At length the itching returned, and a new set of eruptions of scurfy spots appeared in many parts of my body. My back had never been entirely cleared, and the scurf began to increase there and extend itself; but it is not yet so bad as it has been, and it seems to spare the parts that were before affected, except in my back. The swelling has left my legs, which are now as dry and firm as ever, and I feel myself otherwise in perfect health, and have as much vigor and activity as can be expected of my age; so that I begin to be more reconciled to this trouble-

some disorder, as considering it an effort of nature to get rid of peccant matter that might, if not discharged, break up my constitution, etc.

Feb. 28, 1779. The disorder on my skin has continued augmenting. On Monday, the 15th, I dined, and drank rather too freely at M. Darcy's. Tuesday morning I felt a little pain in my right great toe. I bathed that day in the hot bath, which I had long omitted. A regular fit of the gout came on, which swelled my foot exceedingly, and I have had a little in my left foot. It is now going off, and I hope to get abroad in a day or two. No remarkable change in other respects. In this fit I had very little appetite, which I do not remember to have been the case in the former fits.

Jan. 16, 1780. I have enjoyed good health ever since the last date. Towards the end of the summer most of the disorder in my skin disappeared, a little only remaining on my left arm, a little under each breast, and some on the small of my back. I had taken at different times a good deal of Dr. Pringle's prescription; but whether that occasioned the amendment, or whether it was the heat of the summer, as I supposed in October, 1778, I am uncertain. The disorder seems to be now increasing again, and appears upon my hands. I am otherwise well; my legs sound; to-morrow I enter on my seventy-fifth year.

## DCCXVIII

### TO F. GRAND [1]

PASSY, 14 October, 1778.

SIR:—I have considered the note you put into my hands, containing a complaint of the conduct of Captain Conyngham in the *Revenge* privateer. We have no desire to justify him in any irregularities he may have committed. On the contrary, we are obliged to our friends, who give us information of misconduct of any cruisers, that we may take the occasion of representing the same to our government, and recommending more effectual provisions for sup-

[1] John Adams, in his diary, gives the following account of the gentleman to whom this letter is addressed: "Mr. Ferdinand Grand was a Protestant, from Switzerland, who had a house in Paris. Himself, his lady, niece, and sons, composed as decent, modest, and regular family as I ever knew in France. It was, however, by M. Chaumont's influence with the Count de Vergennes and M. de Sartine that he obtained the reputation and emolument of being the banker to the American ministers. Sir George Grand, his brother, might contribute something towards this favor, because he had kept an inn at Stockholm when the Count de Vergennes was Ambassador of France in Sweden, and accomplished the revolution of that kingdom to an absolute monarchy. This was a mere measure of economy in the French court, because, before, it has cost them, in bribes to the States, more money than they could well afford. The meeting of de Vergennes with the heads of the conspiracy had been held at Mr. Grand's inn, and he was rewarded with a cross of St. Louis, which gave him the title of Sir, as I suppose, having never heard that he had any English knighthood, although he had lived in England, where he married his daughter to the Major or Colonel who was afterwards General Provost. This lady, as I presume, is the same who afterwards married Colonel Burr, of New York, and was the mother of Mrs. Allston, of South Carolina. Sir George was connected in partnership with the house of Horneca Fizeau & Co., in Amsterdam, a mercantile and banking company, and who had, or were supposed to have, the favor and confidence of the French ministers of State."—EDITOR.

pressing, punishing, and preventing such practices in future.

By the papers I have the honor to send you enclosed, and which I request you would put into the hands of his Excellency, Count d'Aranda, the care of the Congress to avoid giving offence to neutral powers will appear most evident: First, in the commission given to privateers, wherein it appears that sureties are taken of their owners, that nothing shall be done by them "*inconsistent with the usage and custom of nations*," and those sureties are obliged to make good all damages. Courts of admiralty are regularly established in every one of the United States for judging of such matters, to which courts any persons injured may apply, and will certainly find redress. Secondly, in the proclamation of Congress, whereby strict orders are given to all officers of armed vessels, to pay a sacred regard to the rights of neutral powers, and the usage and customs of civilized nations, and a declaration made that, if they transgress, they shall not be allowed to claim the protection of the States, but shall suffer such punishment as, by the usage and custom of nations, may be inflicted on them. Lastly, in the particular care taken by Congress to secure the property of some subjects of Portugal (a power that has not been very favorable to us), although no reclamation has been made.

All these will show that the States give no countenance to acts of piracy; and if Captain Conyngham has been guilty of that crime, he will certainly be punished for it when duly prosecuted; for not only a regard to justice in general, but a strong disposition to

cultivate the friendship of Spain, for whose sovereign they have the greatest respect, will induce the Congress to pay great attention to every complaint, public and private, that shall come from thence. I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCXIX

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 20 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I received your favor of the 9th instant with a copy of the letter from the Admiralty Office, relative to the proposed exchange of prisoners, in which the precise number of those we have here is desired. I cannot at present give it you, they being disposed in different parts; and indeed it will always be difficult to be precise in it, the number continually changing by new prisoners brought in and some escaping. I think the list I formerly sent you was near 200 [1]; since which, 60 odd have been brought into France from the North Seas by Capt. McNeil, and some by others of our cruisers, and I just now hear that we have 100 more in Spain, taken by one of our privateers in two New York packets, one going thither, the other returning, 88 of which are officers of your army. I wish their lordships could have seen it well to exchange upon account; but though they may not think it safe trusting to us,

[1] [N. B. (by Hartley.)] In July there were about 258, and some mast men, according to the list then sent, which I transmitted to the Admiralty in July last.

we shall make no difficulty in trusting to them. And to expedite the exchange, and save the time that obtaining a correct list would require, we make this proposition: that if their lordships will send us over 250 of our people, we will deliver all we have in France. If the number we have falls short of the 250, the cartel-ship may take back as many of those she brings as the deficiency amounts to, delivering no more than she receives. If our number exceeds the 250 we will deliver them all nevertheless, their lordships promising to send us immediately a number equal to the surplus. We would thus wish to commence, by the first advance, that mutual confidence which it would be for the happiness of mankind that nations should maintain honorably with each other, though engaged in war. I hope this will remove all obstructions to a speedy completion of the business, as the winter approaches and the poor prisoners on both sides may suffer in it extremely.

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## DCCXX

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 26 October, 1778.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I received yours, without date, containing an old Scotch song, full of natural sentiment and beautiful simplicity. I cannot make an entire application of it to present circumstances; but, taking it in parts, and changing persons, some of it is extremely *apropos*. First, Jennie may be

supposed Old England; and Jamie, America. Jennie laments the loss of Jamie, and recollects with pain his love for her, his industry in business to promote her wealth and welfare, and her own ingratitude.

" Young Jamie loved me weel,
And sought me for his bride,
But saving ane crown,
He had naithing beside.
To make the crown a pound, my Jamie ganged to sea,
And the crown and the pound were all for me."

Her grief for this separation is expressed very pathetically.

" The ship was a wreck,
Why did na Jennie dee;
O why was I spared
To cry, Wae is me!"

There is no doubt that honest Jamie had still so much love for her as to pity her in his heart, though he might, at the same time, be not a little angry with her.

Towards the conclusion, we must change the persons, and let Jamie be Old England; Jennie, America. Then honest Jennie, having made a treaty of marriage with Gray, expresses her firm resolution of fidelity, in a manner that does honor to her goodsense and her virtue.

" I may not think of Jamie,
For that would be a sin.
But I maun do my best,
A gude wife to be;
For auld Robin Gray
Is very kind to me."

You ask my sentiments on a truce for five or seven years, in which no mention should be made of that stumbling-block to England, the independence of America.

I must tell you fairly and frankly, that there can be no treaty of peace with us, in which France is not included.[1] But I think a treaty might be made between the three powers, in which England *expressly* renouncing the dependence of America seems no more necessary than her renouncing the title of King of France, which has always been claimed for her kings. Yet, perhaps, it would be better for England to act nobly and generously on the occasion, by granting more than she could, at present, be compelled to grant; make America easy on the score of old claims; cede all that remains in North America; and thus conciliate and strengthen a young power, which she wishes to have a future and serviceable friend. I do not think England would be a loser by such a cession. She may hold her remaining possessions there, but not without a vast expense; and they would be the occasion of constant jealousies, frequent quarrels, and renewed wars. The United

[1] Mr. Hartley had written as follows: "I have told you before that my heart is always set upon peace. In the present circumstances between the two countries, I can only think of the proposition to mediate. You may as easily imagine, that the immediate and explicit acknowledgment of independence must be as grating to this country, as I can that America will not finally depart from it. The answer of the Congress to the Commissioners seems to imply this. What think you of suspending this point for five or seven years, by a truce, and that nothing in the interim shall impeach their independence? If such a proposition as this would bring the parties together, I think there would not be wanting a member of Parliament to propose it to the House."

States, continually growing stronger, will have them at last; and, by the generous conduct above hinted at, all the intermediate loss of blood and treasure might be spared, and solid, lasting peace promoted. This seems to me good counsel, but I know it cannot be followed.

The friend you mention must always be welcome to me, with or without the cheeses; but I do not see how his coming hither could be of any use at present, unless in the quality of a plenipotentiary to treat of a sincere peace between all parties.

Your Commissioners are acting very indiscreetly in America. They first spoke very disrespectfully of our good ally. They have since called in question the power of Congress to treat with them, and have endeavored to begin a dispute about the detention of Burgoyne's troops, an affair which I conceive not to be within their commission. They are vainly trying, by publications, to excite the people against the Congress. Governor Johnstone has been attempting to bribe the members; and, without the least regard to truth, has asserted three propositions, which, he says, he will undertake to prove. The two first of them I *know* to be false, and I *believe* the third to be so.[1] The Congress have refused to treat with the Commissioners while he continues one of them, and he has therefore resigned.

These gentlemen do not appear well qualified for their business. I think they will never *heal* the

[1] Time has confirmed the correctness of Franklin's impressions. All three of his propositions have proved false.—EDITOR.

breach, but they may *widen* it. I am, my very dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCXXI

### TO MR. GRAND

PASSY, 3 November, 1778.

We owe our thanks, sir, to the person who has transmitted to us, through you, the complaint we have received against Mr. Conyngham, and we can assure him anew that, penetrated with respect for S. M. C., nothing pains us more than complaints on his part against our people. He will have seen, by the papers transmitted by you at the time from us to S. E. M. Count d'Aranda, the measures which Congress have taken to prevent any misconduct on the part of our privateers and seamen, and nothing better proves its solicitude in this regard than the proclamation it has just issued, of which the enclosed No. 2 is a copy, and to which we join its resolution for the protection of the property of a ship although belonging to a power with which we have no sympathy.

But if one directs his attention to the atrocious proceedings of the English towards all nations without distinction, he will not be surprised that their pernicious example finds imitators among some individuals of a nation which they have so greatly outraged. But this does not excuse Conyngham. It is a crime in our eyes to have displeased a power for which Congress is penetrated with respect, and

although justified in seizing, by way of reprisals, the English prize which Conyngham had brought to Teneriffe to be sent to Martinique, we will none the less inform Congress of the grounds for complaint which this privateer has given to his Catholic Majesty. This will certainly be a new motive for paying to his flag the homage and respect which it entertains for him. I hope from the wisdom as well as from the justice of S. M. that he will confide in this expression of our sentiments towards him and in turn will permit us to experience the effects of them.

I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.[1]

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## DCCXXII

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 29 November, 1778.

DEAR SIR:—I have heard nothing from you lately concerning the exchange of prisoners. Is that affair dropped? Winter is coming on apace. I understand that your charitable contribution is near expended, and not likely to be renewed. Many of those unfortunate people must suffer greatly. I wish to have a line from you informing me what may be depended on. I am as ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Translated from a French version transmitted by Count Aranda to Florida Blanca and now deposited in the *Archivo General de Reino*, in Simancas.—EDITOR.

## DCCXXIII

### TO DR. PRIESTLEY (PROBABLY)

You desire to know my opinion of what will probably be the end of this war, and whether our new establishments will not be thereby reduced again to deserts. I do not, for my part, apprehend much danger of so great an evil to us. I think we shall be able, with a little help, to defend ourselves, our possessions, and our liberties so long that England will be ruined by persisting in the wicked attempt to destroy them. I must nevertheless regret that ruin, and wish that her injustice and tyranny had not deserved it. And I sometimes flatter myself that, old as I am, I may possibly live to see my country settled in peace and prosperity, when Britain shall make no more a formidable figure among the powers of Europe.

You put me in mind of an apology for my conduct, which had been expected from me in answer to the abuses thrown upon me before the Privy Council. It was partly written, but the affairs of public importance I have been ever since engaged in prevented my finishing it. The injuries too that my country has suffered have absorbed private resentments, and made it appear trifling for an individual to trouble the world with his particular justification, when all his compatriots were stigmatized by the king and Parliament as being in every respect the worst of mankind. I am obliged to you, however, for the friendly part you have always taken in the defence

of my character; and it is indeed no small argument in my favor that those who have known me most and longest still love me and trust me with their most important interests, of which my election into the Congress by the unanimous voice of the Assembly or Parliament of Pennsylvania the day after my arrival from England, and my present mission hither by the Congress itself, are instances incontestable. . . . I thank you for the account you give me of M. Volta's experiment. You judge rightly in supposing that I have not much time at present to consider philosophical matters; but as far as I understand it from your description, it is only another form of the Leyden phial, and explicable by the same principles. I must, however, own myself puzzled by one part of your account, viz., "and thus the electric force once excited may be kept alive years together," which perhaps is only a mistake. I have known it indeed to be continued many months in a phial hermetically sealed, and suppose it may be so preserved for ages; but though one may, by repeatedly touching the knob of a charged bottle with a small insulated plate, like the upper one of the electrophore, draw an incredible number of sparks successively—that is, one after every touch, and those for a while not apparently different in magnitude, yet at length they will become small, and the charge be finally exhausted. But I am in the wrong to give any opinion till I have seen the experiment.

I like much your pasteboard machine, and I think it may, in some respects, be preferable to the very large glass ones constructed here. The Duc de

Chaulnes has one, said, if I remember right, to be five feet in diameter. I saw it tried, but it happened not to be in order.

You enquire what is become of my son, the Governor of New Jersey. As he adhered to the party of the king, his people took him prisoner, and sent him under a guard into Connecticut, where he continues; but is allowed a district of some miles to ride about, upon his parole of honor not to quit that country. I have with me here his son, a youth of about seventeen, whom I brought with me partly to finish his education, having a great affection for him, and partly to have his assistance as a secretary, in which capacity he is very serviceable to me. I have also here with me my worthy nephew, Mr. Williams, whom you ask after. The ingenious Mr. Canton, our other fellow-traveller, I suppose you know is now no more.

As to the present state of our affairs, which you desire to be informed of, the English have long boasted much in their gazettes of their successes against us; but our latest advices are that they have been repulsed in their intended invasion of Pennsylvania, and driven back through New Jersey to New York, with considerable loss in three engagements, so that the campaign will probably end pretty much as it began, leaving them only in possession of the islands which their naval strength secures to them; and we shall in the next campaign be much better provided with arms and ammunition for their entertainment, when our force is to consist of eighty-four battalions.

God bless you, my dear friend, and believe me, ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

## DCCXXIV

### B. FRANKLIN'S PERSONAL EXPENSE ACCOUNT WITH CONGRESS DURING HIS FIRST TWO YEARS' OFFICIAL RESIDENCE IN PARIS

NO. 1

*Extract of a Resolution of Congress*

In Congress, 6th August, 1779.

*Resolved*, That an allowance of eleven thousand four hundred and twenty-eight Livres Tournois per Annum, be made to the several Commissioners of the United States in Europe for their services, besides their reasonable expenses respectively.

That the Salary, as well as the expences, be computed from the time of their leaving their places of abode to enter on the duties of their offices, and be continued three months after Notice of their Recal, to enable them to return to their families respectively.

Extract from the Minutes.

(Signed) CHAR. THOMSON, *Sec'y*.

NO. 2

*Account of Expences by Bn. Franklin*

| 1776. | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.*[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Decr. 3. | To Cash paid for Tea Stoves and Bedding laid in supposed about 600 Livres . | | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| " | Boat hire from Ships to Auray . . . | *l.* 36 0 0 | | | |
| " | Expences at Auray . | 14 19 0 | | | |
| " | Carriage to and Expenses at Vannes . . | 37 12 0 | | | |
| 6. | A Cabriolet for Journey to Paris . . . | 600 0 0 | | | |

[1] *l*, *s* and *c*, stand for Livres, Sols or Sous and Centimes.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Decr. 6. | Expenses to and at Nantes . . . | 174 5 0 | | |
| " | Sending Baggage to Paris . . . | 78 14 6 | | |
| 1777. | | | | |
| Jany. 4. | Expences to Paris and at Versailles . . | 678 9 0 | | |
| | | | 1,619 16 6 | |
| Decr. 7. | Paid Barge to Ship at St Nazarre . . . | *l.*60 0 0 | | |
| | Paid 2 Casks of Wine sent to Crew . . | 72 0 0 | | |
| | Paid sundry small Charges & Comm. . | 31 8 6 | | |
| | | | 163 8 6 | |
| 26. | Willinroy for Wiggs . . . | | 101 5 0 | |
| 31. | Sundry Expences going to & at Versailles this Month . . . | | 158 18 0 | |
| Feb. 8. | Taylors Bill . *l.*900 4 6 of which for W. T. F. . 212 0 0 ——— leaves for me | | 688 4 6 | |
| 27. | For Table Linnen, Sheets &c. . . | | 1,744 5 0 | |
| Mar. 14. | Sundry Expences in Family Furniture . . . | | 1,372 15 8 | |
| April 23. | Sundry other Expences . . . | | 430 0 0 | |
| May 1. | Pillet my Servant for sundry disbursements. . . . . | | 176 16 0 | |
| 19. | For 50 Bottles of Champaigne . | | 213 12 0 | |
| 26. | Fruchard for Carriage and Horses . | | 360 0 0 | |
| June 5. | Pillet for Household Expences . | | 395 16 0 | |
| May 11. | Pillet for sundry Household Expences . . . . . | | 190 11 0 | |
| July 6. | Pillet for Household Expences . | | 579 7 0 | |
| " | Mdle. De Chaumont for Table Linnen . . . . . | | 216 12 6 | |
| 24. | Two Month's hire of the Remise Carriage . . . . . | | 720 0 0 | |
| " | Pillet for Household Expences . | | 389 12 6 | |
| 30. | For the Carriage 20 Days . . | | 240 0 0 | |
| Augt. 1. | For Do. 3 Days . . . . | | 37 0 0 | |
| 8. | Taylors Bill. *l.*1,994 0 0 of which for W.T.F. . 1,146 4 6 ——— leaves for me, | | 847 15 6 | |
| " | For writing Paper . . . | | 11 11 0 | |
| 11. | Pillet for Housd. Expences . . | | 382 8 6 | |
| " | Pillet for Cloathing himself 6 M'ths, & Wages for that time . . | | 200 0 0 | |
| " | For Cooks Wages 6 Months . . | | 150 0 0 | |
| " | Pillet and his Wifes Washing & other expences . . . | | 34 17 0 | |
| " | Cleaning Appartments one Month . | | 15 0 0 | |
| 20. | Harness compleat for two Horses . | | 180 0 0 | |
| " | Lefark for Washing . . . | | 40 2 0 | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sept. | 1. | *Remise* from 1st Augt. to this Day . | 360 | 0 | 0 |
| | " | Bills, &c. . . . . | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| | 12. | Upholsterers Bill . . . | 43 | 12 | 0 |
| Oct. | 14. | Servants for their Dinners in Paris . | 37 | 3 | 0 |
| | 17. | Hatters Bill . . . . | 34 | 0 | 0 |
| | 29. | For mending of Harness . . | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | |
| Feb. | 5. | Fixing the Stove &c. . . . | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | *l.*12,777 | 9 | 2 |

Passy, October 4, 1778.

NO. 3

*Account of B. Franklin's Expences paid out of Monies drawn from Banker by Franklin & Deane jointly taken from joint-Expence Book*

| | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1777. | | | | | |
| Jan. | 27. | Paid Servants' Expences to Passy . . | 5 | 12 | 0 |
| | 28. | Coffee House Acct. of Postage, &c. . | 27 | 7 | 0 |
| | 29. | Paper of various sorts, Wax, &c. . | 11 | 11 | 0 |
| Feb. | 3. | Washing . . . . . | 16 | 12 | 0 |
| | 8. | Mending of Truncks . . . | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| | 11. | Washing . . . . . | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. | Do. . . . . | 7 | 5 | 0 |
| | " | Six Pound of Wax Taper . . | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| | 26. | Champaignes, Wages . . . | 174 | 0 | 0 |
| | " | Expenses of the Horses at Passy & Sadlers Work . . . . | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Sept. | 29. | Hill the Taylor, his Bill . *l.*504 0 0 / of which for W. T. F. . 367 10 0 ——— leaves, | 136 | 10 | 0 |
| Nov. | 20. | St. Louis Expences at Paris . . | 21 | 14 | 0 |
| | " | Washing from 25 Augt. to 14 Nov. . | 67 | 5 | 0 |
| | 28. | Charles, Coachman, his Expences to Paris . . . . . | 21 | 11 | 0 |
| | " | To Do. his Wages from 1 Sept. to 1st Decr. . . . . | 75 | 0 | 0 |
| | " | To Do. his Allowance for Wine, for the same Time . . . . | 27 | 6 | 0 |
| | " | Dumonts Wages from 10 Augt. to 10. Decr. . . . . | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | " | To Do. his Allowance for Wine . | 36 | 12 | 0 |
| | " | To Do. his Expences at Paris . . | 6 | 13 | 0 |
| Decr. | 15. | Renault for Halters & Bridles for B. F. horses . . . | 18 | 0 | 0 |
| | | To Do. for a Coach Glass . . | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Charles the Coachman, his Wages & Expences to 11th Decr. . . | 59 | 19 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | |
| Jany. | 3. | St. Louis Account of Expences when at Paris . . . . . | 41 | 16 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jany. 16. | Baton for the Hire of Carriage Horses | | 336 | o o |
| 17. | Tailors Bill . *l.*444 o o<br>of which for<br>W. T. F. . 333 o o<br>leaves for me, | | 111 | o o |
| Feby. 12. | Dumonts Expenses at Paris & allowance for Six Months Washing | | 56 | 6 o |
| 14. | St. Louis Six Months Wages & Washing | | 148 | o o |
| " | To Do. Expences when at Paris | | 43 | 4 o |
| 16. | Baton for Carriage and Horses | | 336 | o o |
| Aprl 13 | St. Louis two months Wages & Sundry Expences | | 153 | 5 o |
| | | *l.* | 2,128 | 8 o |

Passy, October 4, 1778.

NO. 4

*Account of B. Franklin's Expences paid out of Monies drawn from Banker by Franklin & Adams jointly taken from Joint Expence Book*

| 1778. | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| April 10. | Paid Baton for hire of Carriages & Horses 2 Mo. | 663 | o | o |
| 24. | Dumont's Wages from 10. Decr. to 20. Apl. & Sundry Expences | 174 | 5 | o |
| 25. | For Washing | 57 | 4 | o |
| May 4. | St. Louis Wages &c. from 21 Mar. to this Day | 34 | 12 | o |
| " | To Do. for Dinners when from home | 41 | 18 | o |
| 12. | Washing | 18 | o | o |
| 15. | Do. | 24 | 16 | o |
| 19. | Three Hats for Servants | 33 | o | o |
| June 5. | Blondin 1 Mo. Service, Wine and Washing | 61 | 17 | o |
| 6. | Dumonts Acct. of Dinners &c. | 44 | 13 | o |
| 9. | Mr. Whischall for Books and political Pamphlets | 75 | o | o |
| 22. | Calais's Dinners &c. | 32 | 6 | o |
| July 4. | 5 Volumes of Atlas maritime (for pub. Use) | 120 | o | o |
| 5. | Washing from 18 May to this Day | 60 | 7 | o |
| 13. | Blacksmith | 37 | o | o |
| 22. | Calais's Dinner &c. | 48 | o | o |
| Aug. 8. | Dumont at his Departure in full of Wages &c. | 154 | 19 | o |
| 11. | Washing | 39 | 15 | o |
| | *l.* | 1,720 | 12 | ℔ |

Passy, October 4, 1778.

NO. 5

*Account of Bn. Franklin & S. Deane's joint Expences, paid out of Cash drawn jointly from the Banker*

From Expence Book at Hotel in Paris.

| | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1777. | | | | | |
| Jan. | 25. | Paid hire of a Remise from 22 Decr. to 20. Jan. | 408 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Gave Coachman | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid family Expences from to do. | 324 | 14 | 0 |
| | | Paid Wine Merchants acct. | 240 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid Acct. with Coffee House | 45 | 12 | 0 |
| | | Paid Breakfast Bill to 21. Jan. | 87 | 2 | 0 |
| | | Paid Traiteur, Bill from 21 Decr. to 21 Jan. | 452 | 19 | 0 |
| Feb. | 3. | Paid Le Fark for Family Expences | 48 | 13 | 0 |
| | | Paid loss on Copper Money | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Feb. | 6. | Paid Le Fark acco't of Family Expences | 102 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. | Paid do. acco't do. | 145 | 11 | 0 |
| | 23. | Paid hire of a Remise 1. month & Driver | 372 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid the Tariteur Bill | 464 | 18 | 0 |
| | | Paid Breakfast Bill | 62 | 2 | 0 |
| | | Paid Wine Merchant | 303 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid Le Fark for Family Expences | 143 | 2 | 0 |
| | 26. | Paid Coffee House Bill | 61 | 2 | 0 |
| April | 4. | Paid Copper Smith Bill | 195 | 11 | 6 |
| Aug. | 14. | Paid Hire of Coach & Horses by Order on Grand | 2,448 | 0 | 0 |
| Sept. | 27. | Paid Le Fark for Family Expences at Passy from 7. Aug. to 7. Sept. | 1,358 | 13 | 0 |
| Oct. | 6. | Paid for 20 Cord of Wood | 760 | 0 | 0 |
| | 14. | Paid Le Fark on Acct. Family Expences 7 Sept. to 7 Oct. | 1,281 | 4 | 0 |
| Nov. | 19. | Paid Miss Chaumont for several Bills she pd. | 650 | 17 | 0 |
| Dec. | 1. | Paid Le Fark for Family Expences in part | 549 | 12 | 6 |
| | 4. | Paid do. the whole do. from Oct. 8 to Nov. 8 | 1,470 | 10 | 6 |
| | 8. | Paid for Champaign | 144 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid Blacksmith Work done at Passy | 164 | 0 | 0 |
| | 20. | Paid Le Fark Family Expences from Nov. 8 to 8 Decr. | 1,709 | 1 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | |
| Jan. | 17. | Paid Mr. Bonne for opening Gates for 1. year | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| | 25. | Paid Le Fark in part Family Expences | 240 | 0 | 0 |
| Feb. | 9. | Paid Upholsters acct. | 82 | 0 | 0 |
| | 12. | Paid a Messenger | 1 | 16 | 0 |
| | 14. | Paid Miss Chaumont for Sundry Bills she paid | 709 | 16 | 0 |
| | 20. | Paid for Paper | 25 | 10 | 0 |
| | 24. | Paid Le Fark in part of Family Expences | 1,200 | 0 | 0 |
| Mar. | 25. | Paid Le Fark in part of Family Expences | 1,200 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid Dinner at Versailles 19 Persons 20 this month | 222 | 0 | 0 |
| April | 1. | Paid Le Fark in part Family Expences | 960 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| April | 3. | Paid Le Fark Family Expences in full to 8 March | | 294 | 12 0 |
| | 9. | Paid a Messenger to Paris | | 1 | 10 0 |
| | | Paid Brunel for Joiners Work | | 124 | 5 0 |
| | | | | *l.*19,139 | 13 6 |

B. F. half . . *l.*9,569 16 9
S. D. do. . . 9,569 16 9

PASSY October 4, 1778.

NO. 6

*Account of B. Franklin & Adams joint Expences paid out of Cash drawn jointly from the Banker*

| 1778. | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| April | 16. | Paid Mad'm La Fark in part of Family Expences | 220 | 0 | 0 |
| | 23. | Paid Wood merchant | 440 | 0 | 0 |
| | 25. | Paid for 900 Bottles for Wine | 243 | 0 | 0 |
| May | 1. | Paid M. la Fark on acct. of Family Expences | 360 | 0 | 0 |
| | 8. | Paid Dinner for Americans at Versailles when M. Adams was presented to the king | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| | 13. | Paid M. la Fark on acco't of Family Expences | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| | 14. | Paid for Sealing Wax | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. | Paid Chaumont for Carriage and Horses | 336 | 0 | 0 |
| | 19. | Paid for Stationary | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid M. La Fark in part Family Expences | 1,200 | 0 | 0 |
| | 21. | Paid for blank Books & maps | 16 | 10 | 0 |
| | 30. | Paid for keping the Bay Horse from 1 mar. to 10 may | 105 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid Sundry Postages | 32 | 0 | 0 |
| June | 4. | Paid Dennis the Frotteur, Wages f'm 26. Nov., 1777 to 26 may 78 | 159 | 6 | 0 |
| | 5. | Paid M. La Fark in part Family Expences | 360 | 0 | 0 |
| | 19. | Paid M. La Fark in full of Family Expences f'm 8 mar. to 8 this month | 2,246 | 15 | 0 |
| July | 9. | Paid Stationary | 57 | 16 | 0 |
| | 10. | Paid hire of Servants Bed &c. | 78 | 0 | 0 |
| | 20. | Paid Montaigne in advance for Family Expences | 288 | 0 | 0 |
| Aug. | 8. | Paid do. in full of Family Expences f'm 8 June to 1st July | 737 | 8 | 0 |
| | | Paid do. for Postage 8 June to 1st July | 283 | 11 | 0 |
| | | Paid do. Family Expences from 1st July to 1st Aug. *l.*2,346 5 | | | |
| | | Deduct Expences for anniversary 4 July ch'd to Congress 600 7 | | | |
| | | | 1,745 | 18 | 0 |
| | | Paid do. Postage &c. 1 July to 1 Aug. | 127 | 14 | 0 |
| | | Paid Boisin for 29. Cord of Wood | 1,161 | 4 | 0 |
| | | | *l.*10,741 | 2 | 0 |

B. F. half . . *l.*5,370 11 0
J. A. do. . . 5,370 11 0

NO. 7

*Account of Cash paid out of private Purse on public Account and for other Persons who are to acco't with the Public by B. Franklin*

| | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1776. | | | | | |
| Dec. | 7. | Paid M. Wilt an Express to Paris to announce my arrival | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| 1777. | | | | | |
| Jan. | 12. | Paid to M. Williams on public Account for which he has given the public Credit. (See his Acct. Currt.), | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| Feb. | 8. | Paid Potter an American Prisoner escaped from Eng'd | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| | 11. | Paid for Affairs d'Angleterre | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| | 11. | Paid to Coll'l Lutterloh a german officer | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| Mar. | 31. | Paid to M. Hood of Phila. to help him home | 720 | 0 | 0 |
| April | 29. | Paid Major Klein going into the American Service | 240 | 0 | 0 |
| May | 1. | Paid Pancoucke for Books of Cavalry for Congress | 315 | 0 | 0 |
| | 8. | Paid Forrester for the Accoutrement of Troupes | 69 | 0 | 0 |
| | 27. | Paid Jona. Williams on public acco't for which he has given the public Credit. (See his acct. Currt.) | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| June | 5. | Paid James Shanley, who came with a Message from some Friends of America in Ireland | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid M. Douglas a mate of a Vessel from Philadelphia who had been taken Prisoner | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| July | 30. | Paid for a Courier to St. Malo and back to Paris | 363 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid Schimman a german Officer to help him on to a Seaport to serve in Am. service | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| Aug. | 22. | Paid 2 Louis to 2 Sailors who escaped from Prison | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| | 25. | Paid for a Harness for S. Deane | 204 | 0 | 0 |
| Sep. | 3. | Paid Boussi wine Merchant for S. Deane | 493 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid J. Williams on public acco't for which he has given the public Credit. (See his acct. Currt.) | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| | 17. | Paid for M. Dorscey Surgeon to his Tailor | 192 | 0 | 0 |
| Oct. | 14. | Paid Subscription for Affairs d'Angleterre | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| Dec. | 27. | Paid Bill drawn on me by Ebenez. Smith Platt a poor American Prisoner in Newgate | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | |
| Jan. | 30. | Paid Count d'Attems, who had been taken going to America to serve in the Army | 84 | 0 | 0 |
| Feb. | 6. | Paid Courtney Melmoth a Political Writer | 932 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mar. | 26. | Paid Major Persons and took his Bill on Nesbitt | 360 | 0 | 0 |
| May | 1. | Paid le Blane an officer who made large Demands on Comm'r in order to get rid of him | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. | Paid more to Courtney Melmoth | 288 | 0 | 0 |
| June | 23. | Given to a Stranger a Man of Letters who asked Assistance | 24 | | 0 |
| | | At the Bath [1] | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| | | Capt. Collas 5 Louis | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| July | 21. | Paid to Petter Collas, a Prisoner | 96 | 0 | 0 |
| | | To Courier from Vers | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Dinner there for M. Adams and self | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| Aug. | 5. | Paid Petter Collas | 408 | 0 | 0 |
| | 19. | Paid Joiner | 42 | 0 | 0 |
| | | At the Parish Charity Sermon | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid to Darolles, Engeneer | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Paid M. Mante Ch'y | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| | | French lieut. and Doctor who had been Prisoners | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| | | An American Prisoner from Danvers | 192 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Two French Sailors who had been in our service and taken prisoners but escaped very naked | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Another | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Young a Surgeon of Boston | 96 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Another, a Surgeon | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| | | De Baume | 72 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | *l.*9,273 | 2 | 0 |

Passy, October 4, 1778.

## NO. 8

*Acco't of Cash received By B. Franklin out of Monies drawn from Banker by Franklin & Deane extracted from Expence Book*

| | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1777. | | | | | |
| July | 5. | To Cash recv'd | 514 | 0 | 0 |
| Sept. | 29. | To do. do. to pay W. T. F.'s Tailor | 367 | 10 | 0 |
| Oct. | 6. | To do. do. | 96 | 0 | 0 |
| Decr. | 29. | To do. do. | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | |
| Jany. | 27. | To do. do. to pay Tailor for W. T. F. | 333 | 0 | 0 |
| Feb. | 2. | To do. do. | 396 | 0 | 0 |
| | 6. | To do. do. 88 Louis | 2,082 | 0 | 0 |
| April | 4. | To do. to pay W. T. F. Fencing Master | 117 | 0 | 0 |
| | | To do. to pay M. Vaughan | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | *l.*4,865 | 10 | 0 |

Note.—There is an Error in the Act. of the C. Feb., '78, in Putting the 88 Louis as 2,082 Livres instead of 2,112 Livres, which makes the sum 30 Livres less than it ought to be.

Passy, October 4, 1778.

[1] "Error" is written opposite this entry in red ink.

NO. 9

*Acco't of Cash received by B. Franklin out of Monies drawn from Banker By Franklin & Adams extracted from Expence Book*

| 1778. | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| April 23. | To Cash to pay B. F. Baches's Schooling | . | 451 | 18 | 0 |
| May 4. | To do. rec'vd | . | 72 | 0 | 0 |
| | To do. to pay Sadler | . | 11 | 10 | 0 |
| 19. | To do. rec'd | . | 288 | 0 | 0 |
| June 15. | To do. do. | . | 1,800 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | *l.*2,623 | 8 | 0 |

PASSY, October 4, 1778.

NO. 10

*Account of Cash drawn by Franklin & Deane out of Bankers Hands for Expences and Public Uses*

| 1777. | | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. 20. | To Cash paid by Solier per Receipt | . | . | 2,400 | 12 | 0 |
| Feb. 4. | Do. do. | . | . | 4,801 | 4 | 0 |
| Aug. 14. | Do. paid by Grand per their order to Chaumont for hire of Coach & Horses | | . | 2,448 | 0 | 0 |
| Sept. 26. | Do. p'd Comm. Acc't per Order of S. Deane | | | 4,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Nov. 15. | Do. paid by Grand to W. T. Franklin per order | . | . | 8,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Decr. 29. | Do. paid by do. per Receipt | . | . | 2,400 | 0 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | | |
| Feb. 6. | Do. paid by Grand per Receipt | . | . | 4,800 | 0 | 0 |
| Mar. 25 | Do. paid by Do. | . | . | 4,800 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | *l.*33,649 | 16 | 0 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Paid out of the above to sundry Persons per acco't annexed in which what S. Deane has received is included | *l.*6,606 | 7 | 8 |
| Paid to B. F. and already credited in his acc't | 4,865 | 10 | 0 |
| | | 11,471 | 17 | 8 |
| | | *l.*22,177 | 18 | 4 |
| B. F. half | *l.*11,088 | 19 | 2 |
| S. D. half | 11,088 | 19 | 2 |

PASSY, October 4, 1778.

ANNEXED TO NO. 10

*Acco't of Cash paid out of Franklin's and Deane's Money on public Account or to persons who are to account with the Public*

| | | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1777. | | | | | |
| Jan. 21. | Paid | Silas Deane for an Express to Nantes | 150 | 0 | 0 |
| 28. | | To Capt. Nicholson | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| | | M. Deane's Coffee House Bill | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| | | To M. Lee to pay for silk stockings | 54 | 0 | 0 |
| Feb. 6. | | To M. Deane | 1,200 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. | | To M. Deane | 273 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. | | M. Duportal for Instruments purchased to carry to America | 366 | 0 | 0 |
| 17. | | M. Parker by order of B. Franklin to help M. Hall an American from England | 288 | 0 | 0 |
| 25. | | To M. Israel Potter and Edw'd Griffith to bear their Expences to Nantes being two Prisoners | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| 20. | | 6th Bark for M. A. Lee | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| | | For Silver Goblet & spoon for M. Leedwell Lee | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Carriage of Muskets | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| | | For 2 Tin Cases to send the plan of Boux's Vessels to America | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Decr. 7. | | Miss Chaumont for oats & Hay for M. Deane's Horses | 536 | 14 | 8 |
| 12. | | I. Dumerick who went afterwards by the name of Thornton by Order of the Comm'rs | 1,200 | 0 | 0 |
| 27. | | Paid Wm. Carmichael for his Journey to Nantes | 618 | 0 | 0 |
| 31. | | W. T. Franklin by Order of Comm's to discharge his Account of Advances for them | 107 | 4 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | |
| Jan. 17. | | a French Sailor who escaped from Prison | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| | | M. Kendall a distressed American | 240 | 0 | 0 |
| Mar. 25. | | Major | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| April 6. | | M. Deane's Coachman | 324 | 9 | 0 |
| | | | *l.*6,606 | 7 | 8 |

PASSY, October 4. 1778.

DR. *The Hon'ble the Congress of the United*

| 1778. | No. | | *l.* | *s.* | *c.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oct. 4. | 1 | To my Salary as one of the Commissioners of the United States at the Court of France from Oct. 4, 1776. is 2 years at 11,428 Livres per annum, as per Resolve of Congress 6. Augt., 1779 . . . . . | 22,856 | 6 | 0 |
| " | 2 | To my Expenses paid out of private Purse from the Time of my Appointment to this Day agreeable to the Account hereto annexed, N. 2. allowed by the above mentioned Resolve of Congress . . . . | 12,777 | 9 | 2 |
| " | 3 | To my Expences paid out of Money drawn from Banquer By Franklin & Deane, as per acco't N. 3., Extracted from joint expence Book | 2,128 | 8 | 0 |
| " | 4 | To my Expences paid out of money drawn from Banker by Franklin & Adams, as per acco't annexed N. 4. Extracted from joint expences Book . . . . . | 1,720 | 12 | 0 |
| " | 5 | To my half of joint Expences with M. Dean paid out of monies drawn from Banker by F. & D. as per account annexed N. 5. extracted from joint Expence Book . . | 9,569 | 16 | 9 |
| " | 6 | To my half of joint Expences with M. Adams, paid out of money drawn from Banker by F. & A. as per acco't annexed N. 6, extracted from joint Expences Book . | 5,370 | 11 | 0 |
| " | 7 | To amount of Disbursements out of private Purse on public Account and advances to persons who are to account to Public for the same, as per account hereto Annexed N. 7. | 9,273 | 2 | 0 |
| | | | *l.*63,695 | 18 | 11 |

PASSY, October 4, 1778.
Errors Excepted.

*States in Acco't with B. Franklin.* Cr.

| | | | l. | s. | c. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1776. | | | | | |
| Dec. 7. | | By Cash received of Gruel at Nantes, and accounted for with Solier Banker. (See for this Solier's Acct.) | 1,604 | 8 | 0 |
| 15. | | By ditto rece'd of do. | 2,400 | 12 | 0 |
| 20. | | By ditto rece'd of do. per my order in fav'r Hill | 900 | 4 | 0 |
| 1777. | | | | | |
| Jan. 20. | | By ditto recvd. of do. with Messrs. Lee & Deane *l.*7,201 16. which being divided I received | 2,994 | 0 | 0 |
| 30. | | By ditto recvd. of do. with Messrs. Dean & Lee, *l.*2,400 12. which being divided I received | 800 | 4 | 0 |
| Feb. 26. | | By ditto recvd. do. with M. Dean, being the Bala. of his Acco't, *l.*12,858 8. of which I received | 6,845 | 0 | 0 |
| May 27. | | By ditto recvd. of do. | 360 | 0 | 0 |
| July 7. | | By ditto recvd. of do. | 2,400 | 0 | 0 |
| 27. | | By ditto recvd. of do. per my order in fav'r Hill | 293 | 15 | 0 |
| Aug. 7. | | By ditto recvd. of Grand | 4,800 | 0 | 0 |
| 1778. | | | | | |
| May. 9. | | By ditto recvd. of do. per my order in fav'r Hill | 1,918 | 11 | 0 |
| Augt. 27. | | By ditto recvd. of do. | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| | No. | | | | |
| Oct. 4. | 8 | By ditto received at Sundry Times out of the monies drawn from Banker by Franklin & Deane, agreeable to acct. annexed, N. 8. (Error of 30 Livs. *less* in this acct). | 4,865 | 10 | 0 |
| " | 9 | By ditto recvd. at Sundry Times from Monies drawn from Banker By Franklin & Adams, as per acc't annexed, No. 9 | 2,623 | 8 | 0 |
| " | 10 | By ditto received from Banker jointly with M. Deane, which is equally divided after first deducting the Payments which have been made out of said Monies for Public acco't, or to Persons who are to acco't to the Public agreable to the accounts annexed No. 10, B. F. proportion is | 11,088 | 9 | 4 |
| " | 11 | By ditto recvd. from Banker jointly with M. Adams, which is equally divided after first deducting the Payments which have been made out of said monies for the Public, or to persons who are to acco't with the Public as per acct. annexed N. 11 | 7,634 | 2 | 6 |
| | | | 52,028 | 4 | 10 |
| | | Balance due | 11,667 | 14 | 1 |
| | | | *l.*63,695 | 18 | 11 |

NO. 11

*Account of Cash drawn by Franklin & Adams out of Bauker's Hands for Expences and Public Uses*

| 1778. | | | l. | s. | c. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| April | 9. | To Cash paid per Receipt by Grand | 4,800 | 0 | 0 |
| May | 9. | do. paid by do. per | 4,800 | 0 | 0 |
| May | 26. | do. paid by do. to Gammon Wine merchant per order F. | 2,418 | 0 | 0 |
| June | 16. | do. paid by do. per Receipt | 4,800 | 0 | 0 |
| Aug. | 7. | do. paid by do. per do. | 4,800 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | 21,618 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Paid out of the above to sundry Persons per acco't annexed in which what Adams has received is included | l.3,726 | 8 | 0 | |
| Paid to B. F. & already credited in his acco't | 2,623 | 8 | 0 | |
| | | | 6,349 | 16 | 0 |
| | | | l.15,268 | 4 | 0 |
| B. F. half | l.7,634 | 2 | 0 | |
| J. A. half | 7,634 | 2 | 0 | |

Passy, October 4, 1778.

ANNEXED TO NO. 11

*Acco't of Cash paid out of Franklin & Adams Money on public Account or to Persons who are to account with the Public*

| 1778. | | | l. | s. | c. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| April | 9. | Paid Jno. Farland to bear his Expences to Bord'n | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| | | James Barnett Do. l.120 | | | |
| | | Do. Tailors Bill 126 | | | |
| | | | 246 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10. | Bringing M. Adams Things from Paris | 3 | 12 | 0 |
| | | Wheelwright Work done for M. Deane | 168 | 0 | 0 |
| | 22. | M. Adams for Buckles 54 & Cash 480 | 534 | 0 | 0 |
| | 24. | to John Chandler to bear his Expences to Bord'n | 180 | 0 | 0 |
| May | 1. | For hire of Horses for M. Deane | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Hill Tailor for Do. | 278 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4. | To John Adams | 480 | 0 | 0 |
| | 7. | Blondin for M. Deane's Acc't the Bal. due for Service | 414 | 1 | 0 |
| | | Blondin's Brother for Do. likewise a servant | 244 | 16 | 0 |
| | | M. Deane's Sadler | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| | | M. Holker's Acco't of Carriage of G. Montymont | 184 | 11 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| June 15. | A Poor German Sailor . . . | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| | Subscription for Courier de l' Europe | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| July 13. | La veuve Soubrillard Traiteur for M. Deane . . . . . | 12 | 11 | 0 |
| | Blacksmith for Acc't Do. . | 80 | 10 | 0 |
| Aug. 8. | Expence of Aniversary of 4. July . | 600 | 7 | 0 |
| | | *l.*3,726 | 8 | 0 |

PASSY, October 4, 1778.

## DCCXXV

### THE EPHEMERA: AN EMBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE

TO MADAME BRILLON, OF PASSY

You may remember, my dear friend, that when we lately spent that happy day in the delightful garden and sweet society of the Moulin Joly, I stopped a little in one of our walks, and stayed some time behind the company. We had been shown numberless skeletons of a kind of little fly, called an ephemera, whose successive generations, we were told, were bred and expired within the day. I happened to see a living company of them on a leaf, who appeared to be engaged in conversation. You know I understand all the inferior animal tongues. My too great application to the study of them is the best excuse I can give for the little progress I have made in your charming language. I listened through curiosity to the discourse of these little creatures; but as they, in their national vivacity, spoke three or four together, I could make but little of their conversation. I found, however, by some broken expressions that I heard now and then, they were disputing warmly on the merit of two foreign musicians, one a *cousin*, the other a *moscheto;* in which dispute they spent

their time, seemingly as regardless of the shortness of life as if they had been sure of living a month. Happy people! thought I; you are certainly under a wise, just, and mild government, since you have no public grievances to complain of, nor any subject of contention but the perfections and imperfections of foreign music. I turned my head from them to an old gray-headed one, who was single on another leaf, and talking to himself. Being amused with his soliloquy, I put it down in writing, in hopes it will likewise amuse her to whom I am so much indebted for the most pleasing of all amusements, her delicious company and heavenly harmony.

"It was," said he, "the opinion of learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished long before my time, that this vast world, the Moulin Joly, could not itself subsist more than eighteen hours; and I think there was some foundation for that opinion, since, by the apparent motion of the great luminary that gives life to all nature, and which in my time has evidently declined considerably towards the ocean at the end of our earth, it must then finish its course, be extinguished in the waters that surround us, and leave the world in cold and darkness, necessarily producing universal death and destruction. I have lived seven of those hours, a great age, being no less than four hundred and twenty minutes of time. How very few of us continue so long! I have seen generations born, flourish, and expire. My present friends are the children and grandchildren of the friends of my youth, who are now, alas, no more! And I must soon follow

them; for, by the course of nature, though still in health, I cannot expect to live above seven or eight minutes longer. What now avails all my toil and labor in amassing honey-dew on this leaf, which I cannot live to enjoy! What the political struggles I have been engaged in for the good of my compatriot inhabitants of this bush, or my philosophical studies for the benefit of our race in general! for in politics what can laws do without morals? Our present race of ephemeræ will in a course of minutes become corrupt, like those of other and older bushes, and consequently as wretched. And in philosophy how small our progress! Alas! art is long, and life is short! My friends would comfort me with the idea of a name they say I shall leave behind me; and they tell me I have lived long enough to nature and to glory. But what will fame be to an ephemera who no longer exists? And what will become of all history in the eighteenth hour, when the world itself, even the whole Moulin Joly, shall come to its end and be buried in universal ruin?"

To me, after all my eager pursuits, no solid pleasures now remain, but the reflection of a long life spent in meaning well, the sensible conversation of a few good lady ephemeræ, and now and then a kind smile and a tune from the ever amiable *Brillante*.[1]

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] The substance of these reflections of the venerable EPHEMERA appeared in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, of which Franklin was then editor and publisher, December 4, 1735, in an essay "ON HUMAN VANITY." In its original form the article purports to be a communication from some other person. In the above letter to "the ever amiable *Brillante*," it was doubtless re-written from memory, and was much improved both as to diction and sentiment.

## DCCXXVI

### THE WHISTLE

TO MADAME BRILLON

1779.

I received my dear friend's two letters, one for Wednesday and one for Saturday. This is again Wednesday. I do not deserve one for to-day, because I have not answered the former. But, indolent as I am, and averse to writing, the fear of having no more of your pleasing epistles, if I do not contribute to the correspondence, obliges me to take up my pen; and as Mr. B. has kindly sent me word that he sets out to-morrow to see you, instead of spending this Wednesday evening, as I have done its namesakes, in your delightful company, I sit down to spend it in thinking of you, in writing to you, and in reading over and over again your letters.

I am charmed with your description of Paradise, and with your plan of living there; and I approve much of your conclusion, that, in the meantime, we should draw all the good we can from this world. In my opinion we might all draw more good from it than we do, and suffer less evil, if we would take care not to give too much for *whistles*. For to me it seems that most of the unhappy people we meet with are become so by neglect of that caution.

You ask what I mean? You love stories, and will excuse my telling one of myself.

When I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pocket with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and being charmed with the sound of a *whistle*, that

I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle*, but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money; and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the whistle gave me pleasure.

This, however, was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind; so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle;* and I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle.*

When I saw one too ambitious of court favor, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle.*

When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed,* said I, *too much for his whistle.*

If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of

benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man*, said I, *you pay too much for your whistle.*

When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporeal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man*, said I, *you are providing pain for yourself, instead of pleasure; you give too much for your whistle.*

If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.*

When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity*, say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle!*

In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles.*

Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider that, with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in the world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought; for if they were put to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more given too much for the *whistle.*

Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours very sincerely and with unalterable affection,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCCXXVII

### A PETITION OF THE LEFT HAND

#### TO THOSE WHO HAVE THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF EDUCATION

I address myself to all the friends of youth, and conjure them to direct their compassionate regards to my unhappy fate, in order to remove the prejudices of which I am the victim. There are twin sisters of us; and the two eyes of man do not more resemble, nor are capable of being upon better terms with, each other, than my sister and myself, were it not for the partiality of our parents, who make the most injurious distinctions between us. From my infancy, I have been led to consider my sister as a being of a more elevated rank. I was suffered to grow up without the least instruction, while nothing was spared in her education. She had masters to teach her writing, drawing, music, and other accomplishments; but if by chance I touched a pencil, a pen, or a needle, I was bitterly rebuked; and more than once I have been beaten for being awkward, and wanting a graceful manner. It is true, my sister associated me with her upon some occasions; but she always made a point of taking the lead, calling upon me only from necessity, or to figure by her side.

But conceive not, sirs, that my complaints are instigated merely by vanity. No; my uneasiness is occasioned by an object much more serious. It is the practice in our family that the whole business of providing for its subsistence falls upon my sister and myself. If any indisposition should attack my sister, —and I mention it in confidence upon this occasion,

that she is subject to the gout, the rheumatism, and cramp, without making mention of other accidents,—what would be the fate of our poor family? Must not the regret of our parents be excessive, at having placed so great a difference between sisters who are so perfectly equal? Alas! we must perish from distress; for it would not be in my power even to scrawl a suppliant petition for relief, having been obliged to employ the hand of another in transcribing the request which I have now the honor to prefer to you.

Condescend, sirs, to make my parents sensible of the injustice of an exclusive tenderness, and of the necessity of distributing their care and affection among all their children equally. I am, with a profound respect, sirs, your obedient servant,

THE LEFT HAND.

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## DCCXXVIII

### SKETCH OF AN ENGLISH SCHOOL

FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE PHILADELPHIA ACADEMY

It is expected that every scholar to be admitted into this school be at least able to pronounce and divide the syllables in reading, and to write a legible hand. None to be received that are under —— years of age.

*First or Lowest Class*

Let the first class learn the English Grammar rules, and at the same time let particular care be taken to improve them in orthography. Perhaps the latter is best done by pairing the scholars; two of those

nearest equal in their spelling to be put together. Let these strive for victory; each propounding ten words every day to the other to be spelled. He that spells truly most of the other's words is victor for that day; he that is victor most days in a month, to obtain a prize, a pretty, neat book of some kind, useful in their future studies. This method fixes the attention of children extremely to the orthography of words, and makes them good spellers very early. It is a shame for a man to be so ignorant of this little art in his own language as to be perpetually confounding words of like sound and different significations; the consciousness of which defect makes some men, otherwise of good learning and understanding, averse to writing even a common letter.

Let the pieces read by the scholars in this class be short; such as Croxall's *Fables*, and little stories. In giving the lesson, let it be read to them; let the meaning of the difficult words in it be explained to them; and let them con over by themselves before they are called to read to the master or usher, who is to take particular care that they do not read too fast, and that they duly observe the stops and pauses. A vocabulary of the most useful difficult words might be formed for their use, with explanations; and they might daily get a few of those words and explanations by heart, which would a little exercise their memories; or at least they might write a number of them in a small book for the purpose, which would help to fix the meaning of those words in their minds, and at the same time furnish every one with a little dictionary for his future use.

*The Second Class*

To be taught reading with attention, and with proper modulations of the voice, according to the sentiment and the subject.

Some short pieces, not exceeding the length of a *Spectator*, to be given this class for lessons (and some of the easier *Spectator* would be very suitable for the purpose). These lessons might be given every night as tasks, the scholars to study them against the morning. Let it then be required of them to give an account, first, of the parts of speech, and construction of one or two sentences. This will oblige them to recur frequently to their grammar, and fix its principle rules in their memory. Next, of the intention of the writer, or the scope of the piece, the meaning of each sentence and of every uncommon word. This would early acquaint them with the meaning and force of words, and give them that most necessary habit of reading with attention.

The master then to read the piece with the proper modulations of voice, due emphasis, and suitable action, where action is required; and put the youth on imitating his manner.

Where the author has used an expression not the best, let it be pointed out, and let his beauties be particularly remarked to the youth.

Let the lessons for reading be varied, that the youth may be made acquainted with good styles of all kinds, in prose and verse, and the proper manner of reading each kind; sometimes a well-told story, a piece of a sermon, a general's speech to his soldiers,

a speech in a tragedy, some part of a comedy, an ode, a satire, a letter, blank verse, Hudibrastic, heroic, etc. But let such lessons be chosen for reading as contain some useful instruction, whereby the understanding or morals of the youth may at the same time be improved.

It is required that they should first study and understand the lessons before they are put upon reading them properly, to which end each boy should have an English dictionary to help him over difficulties. When our boys read English to us we are apt to imagine they understand what they read, because we do, and because it is their mother tongue. But they often read as parrots speak, knowing little or nothing of the meaning. And it is impossible a reader should give the due modulation to his voice and pronounce properly, unless his understanding goes before his tongue, and makes him master of the sentiment. Accustoming boys to read aloud what they do not first understand, is the cause of those even, set tones, so common among readers, which, when they have once got the habit of using, they find so difficult to correct; by which means, among fifty readers we scarcely find a good one. For want of good reading, pieces published with a view to influence the minds of men, for their own or the public benefit, lose half their force. Were there but one good reader in a neighborhood, a public orator might be heard throughout a nation with the same advantages, and have the same effect upon his audience, as if they stood within the reach of his voice.

*The Third Class*

To be taught speaking properly and gracefully, which is near akin to good reading, and naturally follows it in the studies of youth. Let the scholars of this class begin with learning the elements of rhetoric from some short system, so as to be able to give an account of the most useful tropes and figures. Let all their bad habits of speaking, all offences against good grammar, all corrupt or foreign accents, and all improper phrases, be pointed out to them. Short speeches from the Roman, or other history, or from the parliamentary debates, might be got by heart, and delivered with the proper action, etc. Speeches and scenes in our best tragedies and comedies (avoiding every thing that could injure the morals of youth) might likewise be got by rote, and the boys exercised in delivering or acting them, great care being taken to form their manner after the truest models.

For their further improvement, and a little to vary their studies, let them now begin to read history, after having got by heart a short table of the principal epochas in chronology. They may begin with Rollin's Ancient and Roman histories, and proceed at proper hours, as they go through the subsequent classes, with the best histories of our own nation and colonies. Let emulation be excited among the boys by giving, weekly, little prizes, or other small encouragements, to those who are able to give the best account of what they have read, as to time, places, names of persons, etc. This will make them read

with attention, and imprint the history well in their memories. In remarking on the history, the master will have fine opportunities of instilling instruction of various kinds, and improving the morals as well as the understandings of youth.

The natural and mechanic history, contained in the *Spectacle de la Nature*, might also be begun in in this class, and continued through the subsequent classes, by other books of the same kind; for, next to the knowledge of duty, this kind of knowledge is certainly the most useful, as well as the most entertaining. The merchant may thereby be enabled better to understand many commodities in trade; the handicraftsman to improve his business by new instruments, mixtures, and materials; and frequently hints are given for new manufactures, or new methods of improving land, that may be set on foot greatly to the advantage of a country.

### *The Fourth Class*

To be taught composition. Writing one's own language well is the next necessary accomplishment after good speaking. It is the writing-master's business to take care that the boys make fair characters, and place them straight and even on the lines; but to form their style, and even to take care that the stops and capitals are properly disposed, is the part of the English master. The boys should be put on writing letters to each other on any common occurrences, and on various subjects, imaginary business, etc., containing little stories, accounts of their late

reading, what parts of authors please them, and why; letters of congratulation, of compliment, of request, of thanks, of recommendation, of admonition, of consolation, of expostulation, excuse, etc. In these they should be taught to express themselves clearly, concisely, and naturally, without affected words or high-flown phrases. All their letters to pass through the master's hand, who is to point out the faults, advise the corrections, and commend what he finds right. Some of the best letters published in our own language, as Sir William Temple's, those of Pope and his friends, and some others, might be set before the youth as models, their beauties pointed out and explained by the master, the letters themselves transcribed by the scholar.

Dr. Johnson's *Ethices Elementa, or First Principles of Morality*, may now be read by the scholars, and explained by the master, to lay a solid foundation of virtue and piety in their minds. And as this class continues the reading of history, let them now, at proper hours, receive some further instruction in chronology, and in that part of geography (from the mathematical master) which is necessary to understand the maps and globes. They should also be acquainted with the modern names of the places they find mentioned in ancient writers. The exercises of good reading, and proper speaking, still continued at suitable times.

*Fifth Class*

To improve the youth in composition, they may now, besides continuing to write letters, begin to

write little essays in prose, and sometimes in verse; not to make them poets, but for this reason, that nothing acquaints a lad so speedily with variety of expression as the necessity of finding such words and phrases as will suit the measure, sound, and rhyme of verse, and at the same time well express the sentiment. These essays should all pass under the master's eye, who will point out their faults, and put the writer on correcting them. Where the judgment is not ripe enough for forming new essays, let the sentiments of a *Spectator* be given, and required to be clothed in the scholar's own words; or the circumstances of some good story, the scholar to find expression. Let them be put sometimes on abridging a paragraph of a diffuse author; sometimes on dilating or amplifying what is written more closely. And now let Dr. Johnson's *Noetica, or First Principles of Human Knowledge*, containing a logic, or art of reasoning, etc., be read by the youth, and the difficulties that may occur to them be explained by the master. The reading of history, and the exercises of good reading and just speaking, still continued.

### *Sixth Class*

In this class, besides continuing the studies of the preceding in history, rhetoric, logic, moral and natural philosophy, the best English authors may be read and explained; as Tillotson, Milton, Locke, Addison, Pope, Swift, the higher papers in the *Spectator* and *Guardian*, the best translations of Homer, Virgil, and Horace, of Telemachus, *Travels of Cyrus*, etc.

Once a year let there be public exercises in the hall, the trustees and citizens present. Then let fine gilt books be given as prizes to such boys as distinguish themselves and excel the others in any branch of learning, making three degrees of comparison; giving the best prize to him that performs best, a less valuable one to him that comes up next to the best, and another to the third; commendations, encouragement, and advice to the rest; keeping up their hopes, that by industry they may excel another time. The names of those that obtain the prize to be yearly printed in a list.

The hours of each day are to be divided and disposed in such a manner as that some classes may be with the writing-master, improving their hands; others with the mathematical master, learning arithmetic, accounts, geography, use of the globes, drawing, mechanics, etc.; while the rest are in the English school, under the English master's care.

Thus instructed, youth will come out of this school fitted for learning any business, calling, or profession, except such wherein languages are required; and though unacquainted with any ancient or foreign tongue, they will be masters of their own, which is of more immediate and general use, and withal will have attained many other valuable accomplishments; the time usually spent in acquiring those languages, often without success, being here employed in laying such a foundation of knowledge and ability as, properly improved, may qualify them to pass through and execute the several offices of civil life with advantage and reputation to themselves and country.

## DCCXXIX

### THE HANDSOME AND DEFORMED LEG

There are two sorts of people in the world, who, with equal degrees of health and wealth, and the other comforts of life, become, the one happy, and the other miserable. This arises very much from the different views in which they consider things, persons, and events; and the effect of those different views upon their own minds.

In whatever situation men can be placed, they may find conveniences and inconveniences; in whatever company, they may find persons and conversations more or less pleasing; at whatever table, they may meet with meats and drinks of better and worse taste, dishes better and worse dressed; in whatever climate, they will find good and bad weather; under whatever government, they may find good and bad laws, and good and bad administration of those laws; in whatever poem, or work of genius, they may see faults and beauties; in almost every face, and every person, they may discover fine features and defects, good and bad qualities.

Under these circumstances, the two sorts of people above mentioned fix their attention: those who are disposed to be happy, on the conveniences of things, the pleasant parts of conversation, the well-dressed dishes, the goodness of the wines, the fine weather, etc., and enjoy all with cheerfulness. Those who are to be unhappy, think and speak only of the contraries. Hence they are continually discontented with themselves, and, by their remarks, sour the

pleasures of society, offend personally many people, and make themselves everywhere disagreeable. If this turn of mind was founded in nature, such unhappy persons would be the more to be pitied. But as the disposition to criticise and to be disgusted is perhaps taken up originally by imitation, and is unawares grown into a habit which, though at present strong, may, nevertheless, be cured, when those who have it are convinced of its bad effects on their felicity, I hope this little admonition may be of service to them, and put them on changing a habit which, though in the exercise it is chiefly an act of imagination, yet has serious consequences in life, as it brings on real griefs and misfortunes. For, as many are offended by, and nobody loves, this sort of people, no one shows them more than the most common civility and respect, and scarcely that; and this frequently puts them out of humor, and draws them into disputes and contentions. If they aim at obtaining some advantage in rank or fortune, nobody wishes them success, or will stir a step, or speak a word, to favor their pretensions. If they incur public censure or disgrace, no one will defend or excuse, and many join to aggravate, their misconduct and render them completely odious. If these people will not change this bad habit, and condescend to be pleased with what is pleasing, without fretting themselves and others about the contraries, it is good for others to avoid an acquaintance with them; which is always disagreeable, and sometimes very inconvenient, especially when one finds one's self entangled in their quarrels.

An old philosophical friend of mine was grown, from experience, very cautious in this particular, and carefully avoided any intimacy with such people. He had, like other philosophers, a thermometer to show him the heat of the weather, and a barometer to mark when it was likely to prove good or bad; but there being no instrument invented to discover, at first sight, this unpleasing disposition in a person, he for that purpose made use of his legs, one of which was remarkably handsome, the other, by some accident, crooked and deformed. If a stranger, at the first interview, regarded his ugly leg more than his handsome one, he doubted him. If he spoke of it, and took no notice of the handsome leg, that was sufficient to determine my philosopher to have no further acquaintance with him. Everybody has not this two-legged instrument; but every one, with a little attention, may observe signs of that carping, fault-finding disposition, and take the same resolution of avoiding the acquaintance of those affected with it. I therefore advise those critical, querulous, discontented, unhappy people, that, if they wish to be respected and beloved by others, and happy in themselves, they should *leave off looking at the ugly leg.*

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## DCCXXX

### MORALS OF CHESS

Playing at chess is the most ancient and most universal game known among men; for its original is

beyond the memory of history, and it has, for numberless ages, been the amusement of all the civilized nations of Asia—the Persians, the Indians, and the Chinese. Europe has had it above a thousand years; the Spaniards have spread it over their part of America; and it has lately begun to make its appearance in the United States. It is so interesting in itself as not to need the view of gain to induce engaging in it, and thence it is seldom played for money. Those, therefore, who have leisure for such diversions, cannot find one that is more innocent; and the following piece, written with a view to correct (among a few young friends) some little improprieties in the practice of it, shows at the same time that it may, in its effects on the mind, be not merely innocent, but advantageous, to the vanquished as well as the victor.

The game of chess is not merely an idle amusement. Several very valuable qualities of the mind, useful in the course of human life, are to be acquired or strengthened by it, so as to become habits, ready on all occasions. For life is a kind of chess, in which we have often points to gain, and competitors or adversaries to contend with, and in which there is a vast variety of good and evil events that are in some degree the effects of prudence or the want of it. By playing at chess, then, we may learn:

I. *Foresight*, which looks a little into futurity and considers the consequences that may attend an action; for it is continually occurring to the player: "If I move this piece, what will be the advantage of my new situation? What use can my adversary make of it to annoy me. What other moves can I

make to support it and to defend myself from his attacks?"

II. *Circumspection*, which surveys the whole chessboard, or scene of action; the relations of the several pieces and situations, the dangers they are respectively exposed to, the several possibilities of their aiding each other, the probabilities that the adversary may make this or that move, and attack this or the other piece, and what different means can be used to avoid his stroke, or turn its consequences against him.

III. *Caution*, not to make our moves too hastily. This habit is best acquired by observing strictly the laws of the game, such as, "If you touch a piece, you must move it somewhere; if you set it down, you must let it stand"; and it is therefore best that these rules should be observed, as the game thereby becomes more the image of human life, and particularly of war, in which, if you have incautiously put yourself into a bad and dangerous position, you cannot obtain your enemy's leave to withdraw your troops and place them more securely, but you must abide all the consequences of your rashness.

And, lastly, we learn by chess the habit of *not being discouraged by present appearances in the state of our affairs*, the habit of *hoping for a favorable change*, and that of *persevering in the search of resources*. The game is so full of events, there is such a variety of turns in it, the fortune of it is so subject to sudden vicissitudes, and one so frequently, after long contemplation, discovers the means of extricating one's self from a supposed insurmountable difficulty,

that one is encouraged to continue the contest to the last in the hopes of victory by our own skill, or at least of getting a stalemate by the negligence of our adversary. And whoever considers, what in chess he often sees instances of, that particular pieces of success are apt to produce presumption and its consequent inattention, by which the losses may be recovered, will learn not to be too much discouraged by the present success of his adversary, nor to despair of final good fortune upon every little check he receives in the pursuit of it.

That we may therefore be induced more frequently to choose this beneficial amusement, in preference to others which are not attended with the same advantages, every circumstance which may increase the pleasures of it should be regarded, and every action or word that is unfair, disrespectful, or that in any way may give uneasiness, should be avoided as contrary to the immediate intention of both the players, which is to pass the time agreeably.

Therefore, first, if it is agreed to play according to the strict rules, then those rules are to be exactly observed by both parties, and should not be insisted on for one side while deviated from by the other, for this is not equitable.

Secondly, if it is agreed not to observe the rules exactly, but one party demands indulgences, he should then be as willing to allow them to the other.

Thirdly, no false move should ever be made to extricate yourself out of difficulty or to gain an advantage. There can be no pleasure in playing with a person once detected in such unfair practice.

Fourthly, if your adversary is long in playing, you ought not to hurry him or express any uneasiness at his delay. You should not sing, nor whistle, nor look at your watch, nor take up a book to read, nor make a tapping with your feet on the floor, or with your fingers on the table, nor do any thing that may disturb his attention. For all these things displease, and they do not show your skill in playing, but your craftiness or your rudeness.

Fifthly, you ought not to endeavor to amuse and deceive your adversary by pretending to have made bad moves, and saying that you have now lost the game, in order to make him secure and careless, and inattentive to your schemes; for this is fraud and deceit, not skill in the game.

Sixthly, you must not, when you have gained a victory, use any triumphing or insulting expression, nor show too much pleasure, but endeavor to console your adversary, and make him less dissatisfied with himself by every kind of civil expression that may be used with truth, such as: "You understand the game better than I, but you are a little inattentive"; or, "You play too fast"; or, "You had the best of the game, but something happened to divert your thoughts, and that turned it in my favor."

Seventhly, if you are a spectator while others play, observe the most perfect silence. For, if you give advice, you offend both parties: him against whom you give it, because it may cause the loss of his game; him in whose favor you give it, because, though it be good, and he follows it, he loses the pleasure he might have had if you had permitted him to think

until it had occurred to himself. Even after a move or moves, you must not, by replacing the pieces, show how they might have been placed better; for that displeases, and may occasion disputes and doubts about their true situation. All talking to the players lessens or diverts their attention, and is therefore unpleasing. Nor should you give the least hint to either party by any kind of noise or motion. If you do, you are unworthy to be a spectator. If you have a mind to exercise or show your judgment, do it in playing your own game when you have an opportunity, not in criticising, or meddling with, or counselling the play of others.

Lastly, if the game is not to be played rigorously, according to the rules above mentioned, then moderate your desire of victory over your adversary, and be pleased with one over yourself. Snatch not eagerly at every advantage offered by his unskilfulness or inattention; but point out to him kindly, that by such a move he places or leaves a piece in danger and unsupported; that by another he will put his king in a perilous situation, etc. By this generous civility (so opposite to the unfairness above forbidden) you may, indeed, happen to lose the game to your opponent; but you will win what is better, his esteem, his respect, and his affection, together with the silent approbation and good-will of impartial spectators.

## DCCXXXI

### A TALE

An officer named Montrésor, a worthy man, was very ill. The curate of his parish, thinking him likely to die, advised him to make his peace with God, that he might be received into Paradise. "I have not much uneasiness on the subject," said Montrésor, "for I had a vision last night which has perfectly tranquillized my mind." "What vision have you had?" said the good priest. "I was," replied Montrésor, " at the gate of Paradise, with a crowd of people who wished to enter, and St. Peter inquired of every one what religion he was of. One answered, 'I am a Roman Catholic.' 'Well,' said St. Peter, 'enter, and take your place there among the Catholics.' Another said he was of the Church of England. 'Well,' said the Saint, 'enter, and place yourself there among the Anglicans.' A third said he was a Quaker. 'Enter,' said St. Peter, 'and take your place among the Quakers.' At length my term being come, he asked me of what religion I was. 'Alas!' said I, 'poor Jacques Montrésor has none.' ''T is pity,' said the Saint; 'I know not where to place you; *but enter nevertheless, and place yourself where you can.*' "

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## DCCXXXII

### AN ARABIAN TALE

Albumazar, the good magician, retired in his old age to the top of the lofty mountain Calabut, avoided

the society of men, but was visited nightly by genii and spirits of the first rank, who loved him, and amused him with their instructive conversation.

Belubel, the strong, came one evening to see Albumazar. His height was seven leagues, and his wings when spread might overshadow a kingdom. He laid himself gently down between the long ridges of Elluem; the tops of the trees in the valley were his couch; his head rested on Calabut as on a pillow, and his face shone on the tent of Albumazar.

The magician spoke to him with rapturous piety of the wisdom and goodness of the Most High, but expressed his wonder at the existence of evil in the world, which he said he could not account for by all the efforts of his reason.

"Value not thyself, my friend," said Belubel, "on that quality which thou callest reason. If thou knewest its origin and its weakness, it would rather be matter of humiliation."

"Tell me then," said Albumazar, "what I do not know; inform my ignorance, and enlighten my understanding."

"Contemplate," said Belubel, "the scale of beings from an elephant down to an oyster. Thou seest a gradual diminution of faculties and powers, so small in each step that the difference is scarce perceptible. There is no gap, but the gradation is complete. Men in general do not know, but thou knowest, that in ascending from an elephant to the infinitely Great, Good, and Wise, there is also a long gradation of beings, who possess powers and faculties of which thou canst yet have no conception."

## DCCXXXIII

### AURORA BOREALIS [1]

1. Air heated by any means becomes rarefied and specifically *lighter* than other air in the same situation not heated.

2. Air being thus made lighter rises, and the neighboring cooler, heavier air takes its place.

3. If in the middle of a room you heat the air by a stove, or pot of burning coals near the floor, the heated air will *rise* to the ceiling, spread there over the cooler air till it comes to the cold walls; there being condensed and made heavier, it *descends* to supply the place of that cool air which had moved towards the stove or fire, in order to supply the place of the heated air which had ascended from the space around the stove or fire.

4. Thus there will be a continual circulation of air in the room, which may be rendered visible by making a little smoke; for that smoke will rise and circulate with the air.

5. A similar operation is performed by nature on the air of the globe. Our atmosphere is of a certain height, perhaps at a medium —— miles. Above that height it is so rare as to be almost a vacuum. The air heated between the tropics is continually rising, and its place is supplied by northerly and southerly winds which come from those cool regions.

[1] First published in Mr. Vaughan's edition of the author's writings. Mr. Vaughan says: "If I mistake not, the paper was read at the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, at the meeting held immediately after Easter, 1779."—EDITOR.

6. The light, heated air, floating above the cooler and denser, must spread northward and southward, and descend near the two poles, to supply the place of the cooler air which had moved towards the equator.

7. Thus a circulation of air is kept up in our atmosphere as in the room above mentioned.

8. That heavier and lighter air may move in currents of different and even opposite directions, appears sometimes by the clouds that happen to be in these currents, as plainly as by the smoke in the experiment above mentioned. Also in opening a *door* between two chambers, one of which has been warmed, by holding a candle near the top, near the bottom, and near the middle, you will find a strong current of warm air passing out of the warmed room *above*, and another of cool air entering it *below*, while in the middle there is little or no motion.

9. The great quantity of vapor rising between the tropics forms clouds, which contain much electricity. Some of them fall in rain, before they come to the polar regions.

10. If the rain be received in an isolated vessel, the vessel will be electrified; for every drop brings down some electricity with it.

11. The same is done by snow and hail.

12. The electricity so descending in temperate climates is received and imbibed by the earth.

13. If the clouds are not sufficiently discharged by this means, they sometimes discharge themselves suddenly by striking into the earth, where the earth is fit to receive their electricity.

14. The earth in temperate and warm climates is generally fit to receive it, being a good conductor.

15. A certain quantity of heat will make some bodies good conductors that will not otherwise conduct.

16. Thus wax rendered fluid, and glass softened by heat, will both of them conduct.

17. And water, though naturally a good conductor, will not conduct well when frozen into ice by a common degree of cold; not at all where the cold is extreme.

18. Snow falling upon frozen ground has been found to retain its electricity; and to communicate it to an isolated body, when after falling it has been driven about by the wind.

19. The humidity, contained in all the equatorial clouds that reach the polar regions must there be condensed and fall in snow.

20. The great cake of ice that eternally covers those regions may be too hard frozen to permit the electricity, descending with that snow, to enter the earth.

21. It will therefore be *accumulated upon that ice.*

22. The atmosphere, being heavier in the polar regions than in the equatorial, will there be lower; as well from that cause as from the smaller effect of the centrifugal force; consequently the distance to the vacuum above the atmosphere will be less at the poles than elsewhere; and probably much less than the distance (upon the surface of the globe) extending from the pole to those latitudes in which the earth is so thawed as to receive and imbibe electricity; the frost continuing to latitude 80, which is 10 degrees

or 600 miles from the pole, while the height of the atmosphere there, of such density as to obstruct the motion of the electric fluid, can scarce be estimated above —— miles.

23. The *vacuum* above is a good conductor.

24. May not, then, the great quantity of electricity brought into the polar regions by the clouds, which are condensed there, and fall in snow, which electricity would enter the earth, but cannot penetrate the ice; may it not, I say (*as a bottle overcharged*) break through that low atmosphere and run along in the vacuum over the air towards the equator, diverging as the degrees of longitude enlarge, strongly visible where densest, and becoming less visible as it more diverges; till it finds a passage to the earth in more temperate climates, or is mingled with their upper air?

25. If such an operation of nature were really performed, would it not give all the appearances of an AURORA BOREALIS?

26. And would not the auroræ become more frequent *after the approach of winter;* not only because more visible in the longer nights, but also because in summer the long presence of the sun may soften the surface of the great ice cake, and render it a conductor, by which the accumulation of electricity in the polar regions will be prevented?

27. The *atmosphere of the polar regions* being made more dense by the extreme cold, and all the moisture in that air being frozen, may not any great light arising therein, and passing through it, render its density in some degree visible during the night-time, to those

who live in the rarer air of more southern latitudes? And would it not, in that case, although in itself a complete and full circle, extending perhaps ten degrees from the pole, appear to spectators so placed (who could see only a part of it) *in the form of a segment*, its chord resting on the horizon, and its arch elevated more or less above it, as seen from latitudes more or less distant, *darkish in color*, but yet sufficiently *transparent* to permit some stars to be seen through it?

28. The rays of electric matter issuing out of a body, diverge by mutually repelling each other, unless there be some conducting body near to receive them; and if that conducting body be at a greater distance, they will *first diverge*, and then *converge*, in order to enter it. May not this account for some of the varieties of figure seen at times in the *motions* of the luminous matter of the auroræ; since it is possible that, in passing over the atmosphere from the north, in all directions or meridians, towards the equator, the rays of that matter may find in many places portions of cloudy region, or moist atmosphere under them, which (being in the natural or negative state) may be fit to receive them, and towards which they may therefore converge; and when one of those receiving bodies is more than saturated, they may *again* diverge from it, towards other surrounding masses of such humid atmosphere, and thus form the *crowns*, as they are called, and other figures mentioned in the histories of this meteor?

29. If it be true that the clouds which go to the polar regions carry thither the vapors of the equa-

torial and temperate regions, which vapors are condensed by the extreme cold of the polar regions and fall in snow or hail, the winds which come from those regions ought to be generally dry, unless they gain some humidity by sweeping the ocean in their way; and, if I mistake not, the winds between the northwest and northeast are for the most part dry, when they have continued some time.[1]

[In the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1774, p. 128, is a letter from Mr. J. S. Winn, to Dr. Franklin, stating that since he had first made the observation concerning the south or southwest winds succeeding an aurora, he had found it invariably obtaining in twenty-three instances; and he adds in a note a fresh confirming instance. In reply, Dr. Franklin makes the following conjecture.]

The *aurora borealis*, though visible almost every night of clear weather in the more northern regions, and very high in the atmosphere, can scarce be visible in England but when the atmosphere is pretty clear of clouds for the whole space between us and those regions; and therefore are seldom visible there. This extensive clearness may have been produced by a long continuance of northerly winds. When the winds have long continued in one quarter, the return is often violent. Allowing the fact so repeatedly observed by Mr. Winn, perhaps this may account for the violence of the southerly winds, that soon follow the appearance of the aurora on our coasts.

[1] In one of the copies of this paper there is a line drawn across this last article.—W. T. F.

This paragraph is not contained in Mr. Vaughan's edition, and was probably not communicated to him by the author.—EDITOR.

## DCCXXXIV

### TO MADAME HELVETIUS

Mortified at the barbarous resolution pronounced by you so positively yesterday evening, that you would remain single the rest of your life as a compliment due to the memory of your husband, I retired to my chamber. Throwing myself upon my bed, I dreamt that I was dead, and was transported to the Elysian Fields.

I was asked whether I wished to see any persons in particular; to which I replied that I wished to see the philosophers. "There are two who live here at hand in this garden; they are good neighbors, and very friendly towards one another." — "Who are they?" — "Socrates and Helvetius." — "I esteem them both highly; but let me see Helvetius first, because I understand a little French, but not a word of Greek." I was conducted to him, he received me with much courtesy, having known me, he said, by character, some time past. He asked me a thousand questions relative to the war, the present state of religion, of liberty, of the government in France. "You do not inquire, then," said I, "after your dear friend, Madame Helvetius; yet she loves you exceedingly. I was in her company not more than an hour ago." "Ah," said he, "you make me recur to my past happiness, which ought to be forgotten in order to be happy here. For many years I could think of nothing but her, though at length I am consoled. I have taken another wife, the most like her that I could find; she is not indeed altogether so

handsome, but she has a great fund of wit and good-sense, and her whole study is to please me. She is at this moment gone to fetch the best nectar and ambrosia to regale me; stay here awhile and you will see her." "I perceive," said I, "that your former friend is more faithful to you than you are to her; she has had several good offers, but has refused them all. I will confess to you that I loved her extremely; but she was cruel to me, and rejected me peremptorily for your sake." "I pity you sincerely," said he, "for she is an excellent woman, handsome and amiable. But do not the Abbé de la R * * * * and the Abbé M * * * * visit her?"—"Certainly they do; not one of your friends has dropped her acquaintance." —"If you had gained the Abbé M * * * * with a bribe of good coffee and cream, perhaps you would have succeeded; for he is as deep a reasoner as Duns Scotus or St. Thomas; he arranges and methodizes his arguments in such a manner that they are almost irresistible. Or if by a fine edition of some old classic you had gained the Abbé de la R * * * * to speak *against* you, that would have been still better, as I always observed that when he recommended any thing to her, she had a great inclination to do directly the contrary." As he finished these words the new Madame Helvetius entered with the nectar, and I recognized her immediately as my former American friend, Mrs. Franklin! I reclaimed her, but she answered me coldly: "I was a good wife to you for forty-nine years and four months, nearly half a century; let that content you. I have formed a new connection here, which will last to eternity."

Indignant at this refusal of my Eurydice, I immediately resolved to quit those ungrateful shades, and return to this good world again, to behold the sun and you! Here I am; let us *avenge ourselves!*

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## DCCXXXV

### TO MADAME HELVETIUS, AT AUTEUIL

———And now I mention your friends, let me tell you, that I have in my way been trying to form some hypothesis to account for your having so many, and of such various kinds. I see that statesmen, philosophers, historians, poets, and men of learning of all sorts are drawn around you, and seem as willing to attach themselves to you as straws about a fine piece of amber. It is not that you make pretensions to any of their sciences; and if you did, similarity of studies does not always make people love one another. It is not that you take pains to engage them; artless simplicity is a striking part of your character. I would not attempt to explain it by the story of the ancient, who, being asked why philosophers sought the acquaintance of kings, and kings not that of philosophers, replied that philosophers knew what they wanted, which was not always the case with kings. Yet thus far the comparison may go, that we find in your sweet society that charming benevolence, that amiable attention to oblige, that disposition to please and be pleased, which we do not always find in the society of one another. It springs from

you; it has its influence on us all, and in your company we are not only pleased with you, but better pleased with one another and with ourselves.

I am ever, with great respect and affection, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCXXXVI

### TO L'ABBÉ DE LA ROCHE, AT AUTEUIL

I have run over, my dear friend, the little book of poetry, by M. Helvetius, with which you presented me. The poem on *Happiness* pleased me much, and brought to my recollection a little drinking-song, which I wrote forty years ago upon the same subject, and which is nearly on the same plan, with many of the same thoughts, but very concisely expressed. It is as follows:

*Singer.*

Fair Venus calls; her voice obey,
In beauty's arms spend night and day.
The joys of love all joys excel,
And loving's certainly doing well.

*Chorus.*

Oh! no!
Not so!
For honest souls know,
Friends and a bottle still bear the bell.

*Singer*

Then let us get money, like bees lay up honey;
We 'll build us new hives, and store each cell.
The sight of our treasure shall yield us great pleasure;
We 'll count it, and chink it, and jingle it well.

*Chorus*

Oh! no!
Not so!
For honest souls know,
Friends and a bottle still bear the bell.

*Singer*

If this does not fit ye, let's govern the city,
In power is pleasure no tongue can tell;
By crowds though you're teased, your pride shall be pleased,
And this can make Lucifer happy in hell!

*Chorus*

Oh! no!
Not so!
For honest souls know,
Friends and a bottle still bear the bell.

*Singer*

Then toss off your glasses, and scorn the dull asses,
Who, missing the kernel, still gnaw the shell;
What 's love, rule, or riches? Wise Solomon teaches,
They 're vanity, vanity, vanity still.

*Chorus*

That 's true;
He knew;
He'd tried them all through;
Friends and a bottle still bore the bell.

'T is a singer, my dear Abbé, who exhorts his companions to seek *happiness* in *love*, in *riches*, and in *power*. They reply, singing together, that happiness is not to be found in any of these things; that it is only to be found in *friends* and *wine*. To this proposition the singer at last assents. The phrase

"*bear the bell*," answers to the French expression, "*obtain the prize*."

I have often remarked, in reading the works of M. Helvetius, that, although we were born and educated in two countries so remote from each other, we have often been inspired with the same thoughts; and it is a reflection very flattering to me, that we have not only loved the same studies, but, as far as we have mutually known them, the same friends, and *the same woman*.[1] Adieu! my dear friend, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCXXXVII

### TO L'ABBÉ DE LA ROCHE

"M. Franklin n'oublie jamais aucune Partie où Mme. Helvetius doit être. Il croit même que s'il était engagé d'aller à Paradis ce matin, il ferai supplication d'estre permis de rester sur terre jusqu' à une heure et demi, pour recevoir l'Embrassade qu' elle a bien voulu lui promettre en le rencontrant chez M. Turgot."[2]

[1] Madame Helvetius.

[2] "One may judge of Franklin's gallantry," says M. Laboulaye, "by a note which is preserved in the Imperial Library, and which has never been published. I am indebted for a copy of it to my amiable and learned colleague, M. Paulin, of Paris. I respect the orthography of Franklin."

The note here referred to is given in the text, and the following is a translation of it:

"Mr. Franklin never forgets any party at which Madame Helvetius is expected. He even believes that if he were engaged to go to Paradise this morning, he would pray for permission to remain on the earth until half-past one, to receive the embrace promised him at the Turgots'."

## DCCXXXVIII

### TO L'ABBÉ MORELLET

PASSY, ——.

You have often enlivened me my dear friend, by your excellent drinking-songs; in return, I beg to edify you by some Christian, moral, and philosophical reflections upon the same subject.

*In vino veritas*, says the wise man,—*Truth is in wine*. Before the days of Noah, then, men, having nothing but water to drink, could not discover the truth. Thus they went astray, became abominably wicked, and were justly exterminated by *water*, which they loved to drink.

The good man Noah, seeing that through this pernicious beverage all his contemporaries had perished, took it in aversion; and to quench his thirst God created the vine, and revealed to him the means of converting its fruit into wine. By means of this liquor he discovered numberless important truths; so that ever since his time the word *to divine* has been in common use, signifying originally, *to discover by means of* WINE. Thus the patriarch Joseph took upon himself to *divine* by means of a cup or glass of WINE a liquor which obtained this name to show that it was not of human but *divine* invention (another proof of the *antiquity* of the French language, in opposition to M. Gébelin); nay, since that time, all things of peculiar excellence, even the Deities themselves, have been called *Divine* or Divinities.

We hear of the conversion of water into wine at the marriage in Cana as of a miracle. But this

conversion is, through the goodness of God, made every day before our eyes. Behold the rain which descends from heaven upon our vineyards, and which incorporates itself with the grapes, to be changed into wine; a constant proof that God loves us, and loves to see us happy. The miracle in question was only performed to hasten the operation, under circumstances of present necessity, which required it.

It is true that God has also instructed man to reduce wine into water. But into what sort of water? —*Water of Life.*[1] And this, that man may be able upon occasion to perform the miracle of Cana, and convert common water into that excellent species of wine which we call *punch.*

My Christian brother, be kind and benevolent like God, and do not spoil his good work. He made wine to gladden the heart of man; do not, therefore, when at table you see your neighbor pour wine into his glass, be eager to mingle water with it. Why would you drown *truth?* It is probable that your neighbor knows better than you can what suits him. Perhaps he does not like water; perhaps he would only put in a few drops for fashion's sake; perhaps he does not wish any one to observe how much he puts in his glass. Do not, then, offer water, except to children; 't is a mistaken piece of politeness, and often very inconvenient. I give you this hint as a man of the world; and I will finish as I began, like a good Christian, in making a religious observation of high importance, taken from the Holy Scriptures.

[1] *Eau-de-vie*, that is, brandy.

I mean that the apostle Paul counselled Timothy very seriously to put wine into his water for the sake of his health; but that not one of the apostles or holy fathers ever recommended *putting water to wine.* B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—To confirm still more your piety and gratitude to Divine Providence, reflect upon the situation which it has given to the *elbow.* You see in animals, who are intended to drink the waters that flow upon the earth, that if they have long legs, they have also a long neck, so that they can get at their drink without kneeling down. But man, who was destined to drink wine, is framed in a manner that he may raise the glass to his mouth. If the elbow had been placed nearer the hand, the part in advance would have been too short to bring the glass up to the mouth; and if it had been nearer the shoulder, that part would have been so long that when it attempted to carry the wine to the mouth it would have overshot the mark, and gone beyond the head; thus, either way, we should have been in the case of Tantalus. But from the actual situation of the elbow, we are enabled to drink at our ease, the glass going directly to the mouth. Let us, then, with glass in hand, adore this benevolent wisdom;—let us adore and drink!

## DCCXXXIX

### AN ECONOMICAL PROJECT

*To the Authors of the Journal of Paris:*

MESSIEURS:—You often entertain us with accounts of new discoveries. Permit me to communicate to the public, through your paper, one that has lately been made by myself, and which I conceive may be of great utility.

I was the other evening in a grand company, where the new lamp of Messrs. Quinquet and Lange was introduced, and much admired for its splendor; but a general inquiry was made, whether the oil it consumed was not in proportion to the light it afforded, in which case there would be no saving in the use of it. No one present could satisfy us in that point, which all agreed ought to be known, it being a very desirable thing to lessen, if possible, the expense of lighting our apartments, when every other article of family expense was so much augmented.

I was pleased to see this general concern for economy, for I love economy exceedingly.

I went home, and to bed, three or four hours after midnight, with my head full of the subject. An accidental sudden noise waked me about six in the morning, when I was surprised to find my room filled with light; and I imagined at first that a number of those lamps had been brought into it; but, rubbing my eyes, I perceived the light came in at the windows. I got up and looked out to see what might be the occasion of it, when I saw the sun just rising above the horizon, whence he poured his rays plentifully

into my chamber, my domestic having negligently omitted, the preceding evening, to close the shutters. I looked at my watch, which goes very well, and found that it was but six o'clock; and still thinking it something extraordinary that the sun should rise so early, I looked into the almanac, where I found it to be the hour given for his rising on that day. I looked forward, too, and found he was to rise still earlier every day till towards the end of June; and that at no time in the year he retarded his rising so long as till eight o'clock. Your readers, who with me have never seen any signs of sunshine before noon, and seldom regard the astronomical part of the almanac, will be as much astonished as I was, when they hear of his rising so early; and especially when I assure them *that he gives light as soon as he rises.* I am convinced of this. I am certain of my fact. One cannot be more certain of any fact. I saw it with my own eyes. And, having repeated this observation the three following mornings, I found always precisely the same result.

Yet it so happens that, when I speak of this discovery to others, I can easily perceive by their countenances, though they forbear expressing it in words, that they do not quite believe me. One, indeed, who is a learned natural philosopher, has assured me that I must certainly be mistaken as to the circumstance of the light coming into my room; for it being well known, as he says, that there could be no light abroad at that hour, it follows that none could enter from without; and that of consequence, my windows being accidentally left open, instead of letting in the light,

had only served to let out the darkness; and he used many ingenious arguments to show me how I might, by that means, have been deceived. I owned that he puzzled me a little, but he did not satisfy me; and the subsequent observations I made, as above mentioned, confirmed me in my first opinion.

This event has given rise in my mind to several serious and important reflections. I considered that if I had not been awakened so early in the morning I should have slept six hours longer by the light of the sun, and in exchange have lived six hours the following night by candle-light, and the latter being a much more expensive light than the former, my love of economy induced me to muster up what little arithmetic I was master of, and to make some calculations which I shall give you, after observing that utility is, in my opinion, the test of value in matters of invention, and that a discovery which can be applied to no use, or is not good for something, is good for nothing.

I took for the basis of my calculation the supposition that there are one hundred thousand families in Paris, and that these families consume in the night half a pound of bougies, or candles, per hour. I think this is a moderate allowance, taking one family with another; for though I believe some consume less, I know that many consume a great deal more. Then estimating seven hours per day as the medium quantity between the time of the sun's rising and ours, he rising during the six following months from six to eight hours before noon, and there being seven hours, of course, per night, in which we burn candles, the account will stand thus:

In the six months between the 20th of March and the 20th of September there are

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nights . . . . . | | 183 |
| Hours of each night in which we burn candles . . . . . | | 7 |
| Multiplication gives for the total number of hours . . . . . | | 1,281 |
| These 1,281 hours multiplied by 100,000, the number of inhabitants, give . | | 128,100,000 |
| One hundred twenty-eight millions and one hundred thousand hours spent at Paris by candle-light, which, at half a pound of wax and tallow per hour, gives the weight of . . | | 64,050,000 |
| Sixty-four millions and fifty thousands of pounds, which, estimating the whole at the medium price of thirty sols the pound, makes the sum of ninety-six millions and seventy-five thousand livres tournois . . | | 96,075,000 |

An immense sum, that the city of Paris might save every year by the economy of using sunshine instead of candles!

If it should be said that people are apt to be obstinately attached to old customs, and that it will be difficult to induce them to rise before noon, consequently my discovery can be of little use, I answer, *Nil desperandum.* I believe all who have common-sense, as soon as they have learnt from this paper that it is daylight when the sun rises, will contrive to

rise with him, and, to compel the rest, I would propose the following regulations:

First. Let a tax be laid of a louis per window on every window that is provided with shutters to keep out the light of the sun.

Second. Let the same salutary operation of police be made use of, to prevent our burning candles, that inclined us last winter to be more economical in burning wood; that is, let guards be placed in the shops of the wax and tallow chandlers, and no family be permitted to be supplied with more than one pound of candles per week.

Third. Let guards also be posted to stop all the coaches, etc., that would pass the streets after sunset, except those of physicians, surgeons, and midwives.

Fourth. Every morning, as soon as the sun rises, let all the bells in every church be set ringing; and if that is not sufficient, let cannon be fired in every street, to wake the sluggards effectually, and make them open their eyes to see their true interest.

All the difficulty will be in the first two or three days, after which the reformation will be as natural and easy as the present irregularity; for, *ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*. Oblige a man to rise at four in the morning, and it is more than probable he will go willingly to bed at eight in the evening; and, having had eight hours' sleep, he will rise more willingly at four in the morning following. But this sum of ninety-six millions and seventy-five thousand livres is not the whole of what may be saved by my economical project. You may observe that I have

calculated upon only one half of the year, and much may be saved in the other, though the days are shorter. Besides, the immense stock of wax and tallow left unconsumed during the summer will probably make candles much cheaper for the ensuing winter, and continue them cheaper as long as the proposed reformation shall be supported.

For the great benefit of this discovery, thus freely communicated and bestowed by me on the public, I demand neither place, pension, exclusive privilege, nor any other reward whatever. I expect only to have the honor of it. And yet I know there are little, envious minds who will, as usual, deny me this, and say that my invention was known to the ancients, and perhaps they may bring passages out of the old books in proof of it. I will not dispute with these people that the ancients knew not that the sun would rise at certain hours; they possibly had, as we have, almanacs that predicted it, but it does not follow thence that they knew *he gave light as soon as he rose*. This is what I claim as my discovery. If the ancients knew it, it must have been long since forgotten; for it certainly was unknown to the moderns, at least to the Parisians, which to prove I need use but one plain simple argument. They are as well instructed, judicious, and prudent a people as exist anywhere in the world, all professing, like myself, to be lovers of economy, and from the many heavy taxes required from them by the necessities of the state, have surely an abundant reason to be economical. I say it is impossible that so sensible a people, under such circumstances, should have lived so long

by the smoky, unwholesome, and enormously expensive light of candles, if they had really known that they might have had as much pure light of the sun for nothing. I am, etc.,

A SUBSCRIBER.

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## DCCXL

### THE LEVEE [1]

In the first chapter of Job we have an account of a transaction said to have arisen in the court, or at the *levee*, of the best of all possible princes, or of governments by a single person, viz., that of God himself.

At this *levee*, in which the sons of God were assembled, Satan also appeared.

It is probable the writer of that ancient book took his idea of this *levee* from those of the Eastern monarchs of the age he lived in.

It is to this day usual at the *levees* of princes to have persons assembled who are enemies to each other, who seek to obtain favor by whispering calumny and detraction, and thereby ruining those that distinguish themselves by their virtue and merit. And kings frequently ask a familiar question or two of every one in the circle, merely to show their benignity. These circumstances are particularly exemplified in this relation.

If a modern king, for instance, finds a person in the circle who has not lately been there, he naturally asks

[1] This was one of several articles written by Franklin for the amusement of his friends, and which were found in a portfolio endorsed "Bagatelles."—EDITOR.

him how he has passed his time since he last had the pleasure of seeing him. The gentleman perhaps replies that he has been in the country to view his estates and visit some friends. Thus Satan being asked whence he cometh, answers: "From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it." And being further asked whether he had considered the uprightness and fidelity of the prince's servant Job, he immediately displays all the malignance of the designing courtier by answering with another question: "Doth Job serve God for naught? Hast thou not given him immense wealth, and protected him in the possession of it? Deprive him of that and he will curse thee to thy face." In modern phrase: "Take away his places and his pensions and your Majesty will soon find him in the opposition."

This whisper against Job had its effect. He was delivered into the power of his adversary, who deprived him of his fortune, destroyed his family, and completely ruined him.

The Book of Job is called by divines a sacred poem, and with the rest of the Holy Scriptures is understood to be written for our instruction.

What then is the instruction to be gathered from this supposed transaction?

Trust not a single person with the government of your state. For if the Deity himself, being the monarch, may for a time give way to calumny, and suffer it to operate the destruction of the best of subjects, what mischief may you not expect from such power in a mere man, though the best of men, from whom the truth is often industriously hidden, and to whom

falsehood is often presented in its place, by artful, interested, and malicious courtiers?

And be cautious in trusting him even with limited powers, lest sooner or later he sap and destroy those limits and render himself absolute.

For by the disposal of places he attaches to himself all the place-holders, with their numerous connections, and also all the expecters and hopers of places, which will form a strong party in promoting his views. By various political engagements for the interest of neighboring states or princes he procures their aid in establishing his own personal power. So that, through the hopes of emolument in one part of his subjects, and the fear of his resentment in the other, all opposition falls before him.

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## DCCXLI

### PROPOSED NEW VERSION OF THE BIBLE

*To the Printer of* ——

SIR:—It is now more than one hundred and seventy years since the translation of our common English Bible. The language in that time is much changed, and the style being obsolete, and thence less agreeable, is perhaps one reason why the reading of that excellent book is of late so much neglected. I have therefore thought it would be well to procure a new version in which, preserving the sense, the turn of phrase and manner of expression should be modern. I do not pretend to have the necessary abilities for such a work myself; I throw out the hint for the

consideration of the learned, and only venture to send you a few verses of the first chapter of Job, which may serve as a sample of the kind of version I would recommend. A. B.

### PART OF THE FIRST CHAPTER OF JOB MODERNIZED

| Old Text. | New Version. |
| --- | --- |
| Verse 6. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. | Verse 6. And it being *levee* day in heaven, all God's nobility came to court, to present themselves before him; and Satan also appeared in the circle, as one of the ministry. |
| 7. And the Lord said unto Satan: Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said: From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. | 7. And God said to Satan: You have been some time absent; where were you? And Satan answered: I have been at my country-seat, and in different places visiting my friends. |
| 8. And the Lord said unto Satan: Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? | 8. And God said: Well, what think you of Lord Job? You see he is my best friend, a perfectly honest man, full of respect for me, and avoiding every thing that might offend me. |
| 9. Then Satan answered the Lord, and said: Doth Job fear God for nought? | 9. And Satan answered: Does your Majesty imagine that his good conduct is the effect of mere personal attachment and affection? |
| 10. Hast not thou made an hedge about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. | 10. Have you not protected him, and heaped your benefits upon him, till he is grown enormously rich? |
| 11. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. | 11. Try him; only withdraw your favor, turn him out of his places, and withhold his pensions, and you will soon find him in the opposition. |

## DCCXLII

### APOLOGUE [1]

Lion, king of a certain forest, had among his subjects a body of faithful dogs, in principle and affection strongly attached to his person and government, and through whose assistance he had extended his dominions, and had become the terror of his enemies.

Lion, however, influenced by evil counsellors, took an aversion to the dogs, condemned them unheard, and ordered his tigers, leopards, and panthers to attack and destroy them.

The dogs petitioned humbly, but their petitions were rejected haughtily, and they were forced to defend themselves, which they did with bravery.

A few among them, of a mongrel race, derived from a mixture with wolves and foxes, corrupted by royal promises of great rewards, deserted the honest dogs, and joined their enemies.

The dogs were finally victorious; a treaty of peace was made in which Lion acknowledged them to be free, and disclaimed all future authority over them.

The mongrels, not being permitted to return among them, claimed of the royalists the reward that had been promised.

A council of the beasts was held to consider their demand.

The wolves and the foxes agreed unanimously that the demand was just, that royal promises ought to

[1] Written at the period of, and in allusion to, the claims of the *American Royalists* on the British Government.—W. T. F.

be kept, and that every loyal subject should contribute freely to enable his Majesty to fulfil them. The horse alone, with a boldness and freedom that became the nobleness of his nature, delivered a contrary opinion:

"The king, said he, "has been misled by bad ministers to war unjustly upon his faithful subjects. Royal promises, when made to encourage us to act for the public good, should indeed be honorably acquitted; but if to encourage us to betray and destroy each other, they are wicked and void from the beginning. The advisers of such promises, and those who murdered in consequence of them, should be severely punished. Consider how greatly our common strength is already diminished by our loss of the dogs. If you will enable the king to reward those fratricides, you will establish a precedent that will justify a future tyrant to make like promises, and every example of such an unnatural brute rewarded will give them additional weight. Horses and bulls, as well as dogs, may thus be divided against their own kind, and civil wars produced at pleasure, till we are so weakened that neither liberty nor safety is any longer to be found in the forest, and nothing remains but abject submission to the will of a despot who may devour us as he pleases."

The council had sense enough to resolve that the demand be rejected.

## DCCXLIII

### FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN

BOSTON, 4 January, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR:—The Marquis de Lafayette will do me the honor to be the bearer of this letter. This young nobleman has done honor to his nation, as well as to himself, by the manner in which he has served these States. His intrepidity and alertness in the field are highly distinguished. His prudence and good temper are equally remarkable. He is highly esteemed and beloved in Congress, in the army, and through the States; and, though we are not without parties. and his situation has been sometimes very delicate, I have never heard that he has made a single enemy. He has gone through great fatigues, he has faced uncommon dangers, he has bled for our country, and leaves it, as far as I am able to find, with universal applause. In short, his whole conduct, both public and private, appears to me to have been most happily adapted to serve the great purpose of the alliance, and cement the two nations. Justice obliges me to make this mention of one who has done so much for our country, as well as his own, and from whose acquaintance, with which he has honored me, I have received the greatest pleasure. His acquaintance with our military and political affairs will enable him to give you many details, which cannot easily be conveyed by writing.

You will hear, before this reaches you, of what has been done in this quarter by the armament under the orders of the Count d'Estaing. The abilities

of this commander, his bravery, and zeal for our common cause, are indisputably great. No man could have done more in his situation than he has done. He was unfortunate in the weather he met with, which greatly delayed his passage to these seas, gave an opportunity to the British navy and army to escape from Philadelphia, snatched a victory from him off Rhode Island, and put his fleet in such a condition that he was indispensably obliged to leave that place at a critical time, which occasioned reflections from some that were unmerited. He bore all with a manly patience and uncommon prudence. I admired his firmness, silence, and condescension. He relied on the proofs he had given of attachment to our cause, and of the capacity and undauntedness with which he had prosecuted the service upon which he was sent.

The account he gave of the reasons for coming to Boston with his fleet, before the Council of this State, not only satisfied that body, but gave them a high idea of his merits as a commander. The prejudices of a few soon vanished, which had been raised by an honest but indiscreet warmth in some officers employed in the expedition against Rhode Island. His officers imitated their commander in preserving the best order through the fleet during their residence here; everybody admired the peaceable, inoffensive, courteous behavior of such a number of men; and the Count left us on the 4th of November last, with the strongest impressions of esteem and affection for him, of the friendship of his court and nation for us, and of the superior order and civility

prevailing in the French forces. He is gone, it is conjectured (for nobody pretends to know), for the West Indies. We hope, if the war continues, to see him in the spring, and that Canada will be wrested from the British power. This may be easily done by a joint invasion by sea and land provided our finances will allow us to support an army; but the depreciation of our money is so great that I fear our inability to do this, unless we have assistance, and can procure loans from abroad. If such a plan of operations is adopted, France must give us the most unequivocal assurances that she means not to resume the government of Canada, but to incorporate it with the United States. This is her true interest, and is so agreeable to the principles and basis of the alliance, that I have not the least doubt she intends it, and it will only be needful to make known her intentions in the most explicit manner, at least to us.[1]

It gives me great pleasure to hear of the continuance of your health and vivacity. Though it is long since I have had the pleasure of a line from you, I am sure you do not forget one who is, with the greatest respect and warmest friendship, ever yours,

SAMUEL COOPER.

[1] Concerning this proposed Canada expedition, see Sparks's *Life of Washington*, 2d ed., p. 287.

## DCCXLIV

### TO RALPH IZARD [1]

PASSY, 4 January, 1779.

SIR:—Your intimation that you expect more money from us obliges us to expose to you our circumstances. Upon the supposition that Congress had borrowed in America but five millions of dollars, or twenty-five millions of livres, and relying on the remittances intended to be sent to us, for answering other demands, we gave expectations that we should be able to pay here the interest of that sum as a means of supporting the credit of the currency. The Congress have borrowed near twice that sum, and are now actually drawing on us for the interest, the bills appearing here daily for acceptance. Their distress for money in America has been so great from the enormous expense of the war, that they have also been induced to draw on us for very large sums, to stop other pressing demands; and they have not been able to purchase remittances for us to the extent they proposed; and of what they have sent, much has been taken or treacherously carried into England, only two small cargoes of tobacco having arrived, and they are long since mortgaged to the Farmers General, so that they produce us nothing, but leave us expenses to pay.

The Continental vessels of war which come to

[1] This letter was written by Dr. Franklin, but intended to be signed by the Commissioners jointly. On the back of the manuscript is the following endorsement: "Rough draft of a proposed letter in answer to one from Mr. Izard to the Commissioners, dated January 2d."

France have likewise required great sums of us to furnish or refit them and supply the men with necessaries. The prisoners, too, who escape from England, claim a very expensive assistance from us, and are much dissatisfied with the scanty allowance we are able to afford them. The interest bills above mentioned, of the drawing of which we have received notice, amount to two millions and a half, and we have not a fifth part of the sum in our banker's hands to answer them; and large orders to us from Congress for supplies of clothing, arms, and ammunition remain uncomplied with for want of money.

In this situation of our affairs, we hope you will not insist on our giving you a farther credit with our banker, with whom we are daily in danger of having no farther credit ourselves. It is not a year since you received from us the sum of two thousand guineas, which you thought necessary on account of your being to set out immediately for Florence. You have not incurred the expense of that journey. You are a gentleman of fortune. You did not come to France with any dependence on being maintained here with your family at the expense of the United States, in the time of their distress, and without rendering them the equivalent service they expected.

On all these considerations we should rather hope that you would be willing to reimburse us the sum we have advanced to you, if it may be done with any possible convenience to your affairs. Such a supply would at least enable us to relieve more liberally our unfortunate countrymen, who have long been prisoners, stripped of every thing, of whom we daily expect

to have near three hundred upon our hands by the exchange. We have the honor to be, etc.

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## DCCXLV

### TO THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

PASSY, 15 January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN:—It being undoubtedly our duty to give the clearest account to Congress of the disbursement of their money intrusted to us, and as I apprehend our advancing to Mr. William Lee and Mr. Ralph Izard so large a sum as four thousand guineas at once, in February, 1778, without any order of Congress for so doing, and at a time when money was much wanted to fulfil their actual orders in the purchase of arms, etc., may subject the Commissioners to censure, I think it right and necessary to relate the circumstances, that they may be communicated to our constituents.

Those gentlemen then, having represented to Mr. Deane, Mr. Lee, and myself, that, though they had received commissions to go and reside at the courts of Berlin, Vienna, and Florence, no provision had arrived for their subsistence; that they were nearly ready to set out for their respective destinations, but wanted money to defray the expense of their journeys, for which they therefore requested us to furnish them with a credit on our banker. The Commissioners, fearing that the public interests might possibly suffer if those journeys were delayed till the

necessary provision or orders should arrive from America, thought they might be justified in giving such a credit for the expense of those journeys, and Mr. Lee, being asked what sum he imagined would be necessary, said, justly, that the expenses of his journey could not be exactly ascertained beforehand, but, if he were empowered to draw on our banker, he should certainly only take from time to time what was absolutely necessary, and therefore it was of little importance for what sum the credit should be ordered; it would however look handsome and confidential if the sum were two thousand louis. We thereupon, confiding that no more of this money would be taken out of our disposition than the expenses of the journeys as they should accrue, did frankly but unwarily give the orders.

Mr. Deane and myself were, however, soon surprised with the intelligence that the gentleman had gone directly to the banker, and by virtue of these orders had taken out of our account the whole sum mentioned, and carried it to their own; leaving the money indeed in his hands, but requiring his receipt for it as their money, for which he was to be accountable to them only.

This enormous sum having been received by those gentlemen not above ten months, I was still more surprised when the following letters were communicated to me by my present colleagues, requiring more money. My colleague, Mr. Adams, was at first as much surprised as myself [*Incomplete.*]

## DCCXLVI

### FROM DAVID HARTLEY

LONDON, 23 January, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—You know my constant and earnest desire for peace. You are so fully possessed of my principles upon these subjects, that you cannot doubt but that the sentiments expressed in the fourth letter on the American war, lately written by a Member of Parliament in this country to his constituents, do perfectly accord with mine.[1]

In your letter of 26th October last, you seem to express that a visit from a friend would not be unwelcome, if that friend were in the character of plenipotentiary, to treat of a sincere peace between all parties. You must know from the course of public transactions in England, that the alliance between France and America is a great stumbling-block. Whatever engagements America may have entered into, they will at least by consent of parties be relinquished for the purpose of removing so material an obstacle to any general treaty of free and unengaged parties. If the parties could meet for the sake of peace, upon free and open ground, I should think that a very fair proposition to be offered to the people of England, and an equitable proposition in itself. The universal destruction attending war to all parties ought to be a motive for the restoration of peace, superseding all minute considerations. Knowing the sincerity of your desire for peace, I throw out to you the cursory thoughts which

[1] The letters were written by Mr. Hartley, and published by Almon.

present themselves to me, to take the chance of starting any idea which may lead to that blessed end.

I am yours affectionately,

G. B.

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## DCCXLVII

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 25 January, 1779.

DEAR SIR:—I a long time believed that your government were in earnest in agreeing to an exchange of prisoners. I begin now to think I was mistaken. It seems they cannot give up the pleasing idea of having at the end of the war one thousand Americans to hang for high treason. You were also long of opinion that the animosity against America was not national or general; but having seen the exterminating proclamation of the Commissioners approved by kings, lords, and commons, and that not attended by any marks of popular disapprobation, perhaps you too begin to think you are mistaken. I thank you for writing those excellent letters to your constituents. I like all but your reflections against the king of France for assisting us. In my mind, the coming to the relief of an innocent people under the bloody oppression your ministers were exercising over them, and exposing himself and nation to a war on their account, was not only what any prince had a right to do for the sake of common humanity, but was a magnanimous and heroic action that is admired at present by the wise and good through all Europe,

and will hand his name down with glory to posterity. Our different ways of thinking in this particular will not, however, diminish our private friendship, nor impair the sentiments of sincere esteem and respect with which I am ever, dear sir,

Yours, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCXLVIII

### TO MRS. MARGARET STEVENSON

PASSY, 25 January, 1779.

It is always with great pleasure, when I think of our long-continued friendship, which had not the least interruption in the course of twenty years (some of the happiest of my life), that I spent under your roof and in your company. If I do not write to you as often as I used to do, when I happened to be absent from you, it is owing partly to the present difficulty of sure communication, and partly to an apprehension of some inconvenience that my correspondence might possibly occasion you. Be assured, my dear friend, that my regard, esteem, and affection for you are not in the least impaired or diminished, and that, if circumstances would permit, nothing would afford me so much satisfaction as to be with you in the same house, and to experience again your faithful, tender care and attention to my interests, health, and comfortable living, which so long and steadily attached me to you, and which I shall ever remember with gratitude.

I thought I had mentioned to you before (and I believe I did, though my letter may have miscarried), that I had received the white cloth suit, the sword, and the saddle for Temple, all in good order. I mention them now again, because Polly tells me you had not heard of their arrival. I wore the clothes a good deal last summer. There is one thing more that I wish to have, if you should meet with an opportunity of sending it. I mean the copper pot lined with silver, to roast fowls in by means of a heater. I should also be glad of the piece of elephant's tooth. It is old ivory, perhaps of the time before the flood, and would be a rarity to some friends here. But I doubt you will not be able to send them.

I rejoice to learn that your health is established, and that you live pleasantly in a country town, with agreeable neighbors, and have your dear children about you. My love to every one of them. I long to see them and you; but the times do not permit me the hope of it. Why do you never write to me? I used to love to read your letters, and I regret your long silence. They were seasoned with good-sense and friendship, and even your spelling pleased me. Polly knows I think the worst spelling the best. I do not write to her by this conveyance. You will let her know that I acknowledge the receipt of her pleasing letter, dated the 11th instant. I shall now only observe to you upon it, that I know not how the patent can be taken out in Jacob's name. I am sure he had no claim to it, for when I first proposed to him the making of such wheels at Mr. Viny's, in the country, he objected to it as impracticable. But Mr.

Viny, who seized the thought and carried it into execution, had certainly the best right to the patent. I wish he would send me a good drawing, with the proportions, of the little carriage with horses, which his children came once in to see us. How do they all do, and particularly my little patient Bessum?

Since my coming here I have been told that Mr. Henley, the linen-draper, had said, on my going to America, that I had gone away in his debt. I can hardly believe it. Let me know if you have heard such a thing, and what is the meaning of it. I thought he had been fully paid, and still think so, and shall till I am assured of the contrary. Let me know, at the same time, how my account stands with you.

You wish to know how I live. It is in a fine house, situated in a neat village, on high ground, half a mile [1] from Paris, with a large garden to walk in. I have abundance of acquaintance, dine abroad six days in seven. Sundays I reserve to dine at home, with such Americans as pass this way, and I then have my grandson Ben, with some other American children from the school.

If being treated with all the politeness of France, and the apparent respect and esteem of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, can make a man happy, I ought to be so. Indeed, I have nothing to complain of, but a little too much business, and the want of that order and economy in my family, which reigned in it when under your prudent direction. My paper gives me only room to add that I am ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Passy is now a part of the city of Paris.

## DCCXLIX

### TO MESSRS. LLOYD AND OTHERS

PASSY, 26 January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN:—We had yesterday the honor of your letter of the 21st of this month.

You desire to know what port or ports is or are made free, pursuant to the treaty. We believe that none have as yet been determined on. At present all the ports of France are open to American vessels of all denominations, and we are at present rather doubtful whether it would be politic in us to apply to have any distinction made. If the appointment of free ports would relieve us from the payment of duties of import or export, we should apply immediately. But as we apprehend this advantage would not be the consequence, the limits of the free ports would be prescribed, and the same duties must be paid upon removing goods within or without those limits as are now paid upon imports or exports. Goods, however, might be brought into such free ports from abroad, and there landed and stored for a time, and then exported without paying duties; but whether this would be any great advantage to our trade at present, you are better judges than we. We shall be glad of your advice upon this head, and if you think of any advantages of considerable moment that would arise, we shall be always ready to apply for such an appointment. We are sorry it is not in our power to give you any acceptable information respecting the eighth article of the treaty, which relates to the Barbary corsairs. All we can say is

that we have applied to the ministry upon this head some months ago, and received satisfactory expressions of the dispositions of this government to do every thing that is stipulated in that article of the treaty. But some things remain to be determined by Congress, to whom we have written on the subject, and we must necessarily await their instructions.

There are two inquiries to be made, viz.: which of all the nations who now trade with France is the most favored? and what duties are paid by that nation? These duties, and these only, we suppose, we are to pay; and as soon as circumstances will permit,—two of us having been for a fortnight very ill, and one of us continuing so,—we shall apply to the ministry for an *éclaircissement* upon this head, which we shall endeavor to communicate to you as soon as we shall obtain it.

We have received an answer to our last application for a convoy from their excellencies, the Count de Vergennes and M. de Sartine. But the answers convinced us that M. de Sartine was under some misinformation or misunderstanding relative to the business, which obliged us to write again. As soon as we shall be honored with an answer, we will communicate the result of it to you.

For the Commissioners, by B. FRANKLIN.[1]

[1] This was the last important letter written by Franklin as Commissioner. He was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary on the 14th of September, 1778, and received his credentials the second week in February.

## DCCL

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 3 February, 1779.

DEAR SIR:—I have just received your favor of the 23d past, in which you mention "that the alliance between France and America is the great stumbling-block in the way of making peace"; and you go on to observe that "whatever engagements America may have entered into they may at least by consent of parties *be relinquished* for the purpose of removing so material an obstacle to any general treaty of free and unengaged parties," adding that "if the parties could meet for the sake of peace upon *free* and *open* ground you should think *that* a very fair proposition to be offered to the people of England, and an equitable proposition in itself."

The long, steady, and kind regard you have shown for the welfare of America by the whole tenor of your conduct in Parliament, satisfies me that this proposition never took its rise with you, but has been suggested from some other quarter, and that your excess of humanity, your love of peace, and your fear for us, that the destruction we are threatened with will certainly be effected, have thrown a mist before your eyes, which hindered you from seeing the malignity and mischief of it. We know that your king hates Whigs and Presbyterians; that he thirsts for our blood, of which he has already drunk large draughts; that weak and unprincipled ministers are ready to execute the wickedest of his orders, and his venal Parliament equally ready to vote them just.

Not the smallest appearance of a reason can be imagined capable of inducing us to think of relinquishing a solid alliance with one of the most amiable as well as most powerful princes of Europe for the expectation of unknown terms of peace, to be afterwards offered to us by *such a government*, a government that has already shamefully broken all the compacts it ever made with us. This is worse than advising us to drop the substance for the shadow. The dog, after he found his mistake, might possibly have recovered his mutton; but we could never hope to be trusted again by France, or indeed by any other nation under heaven. Nor does there appear any more necessity for dissolving an alliance with France before you can treat with us, than there would be of dissolving your alliance with Holland, or your union with Scotland, before we could treat with you. Ours is, therefore, no *material obstacle* to a treaty, as you suppose it to be. Had Lord North been the author of such a proposition, all the world would have said it was insidious, and meant only to deceive and divide us from our friends, and then to ruin us, supposing our fears might be so strong as to procure an acceptance of it. But, thanks to God, that is not the case. We have long since settled all the account in our own minds. We know the worst you can do to us, if you have your wish, is to confiscate our estates and take our lives, to rob and murder us; and this you have seen we are ready to hazard rather than come again under your detested government.

You must observe, my dear friend, that I am a little warm. Excuse me It is over. Only let me

counsel you not to think of being sent hither on so fruitless an errand as that of making such a proposition.

It puts me in mind of the comic farce entitled *God-Send; or, The Wreckers.* You may have forgotten but I will endeavor to amuse you by recollecting a little of it.

SCENE.—*Mount's Bay.*

[*A ship riding at anchor in a great storm. A lee shore full of rocks, and lined with people, furnished with axes and carriages to cut up wrecks, knock the sailors on the head, and carry off the plunder, according to custom.*]

*1st Wrecker.* This ship rides it out longer than I expected; she must have good ground tackle.

*2d Wrecker.* We had better send out a boat to her, and persuade her to take a pilot, who can afterwards run her ashore, where we can best come at her.

*3d Wrecker.* I doubt whether the boat can live in this sea; but if there are any brave fellows willing to hazard themselves for the good of the public, and a double share, let them say ay.

*Several Wreckers.* I, I, I, I.

[*The boat goes off, and comes under the ship's stern.*]

*Spokesman.* So ho, the ship, ahoa!

*Captain.* Hulloa!

*Sp.* Would you have a pilot?

*Capt.* No, no!

*Sp.* It blows hard, and you are in danger.

*Capt.* I know it.

*Sp.* Will you buy a better cable? We have one in the boat here.

*Capt.* What do you ask for it?

*Sp.* Cut that you have, and then we 'll talk about the price of this.

*Capt.* I shall do no such foolish thing. I have lived in your parish formerly, and know the heads of ye too well to trust ye; keep off from my cable there; I see you have a mind to cut it yourselves. If you go any nearer to it I 'll fire into you and sink you.

*Sp.* It is a damned rotten French cable, and will part of itself in half an hour. Where will you be then, Captain? You had better take our offer.

*Capt.* You offer nothing, you rogues, but treachery and mischief. My cable is good and strong, and will hold long enough to balk all your projects.

*Sp.* You talk unkindly, Captain, to people who came here only for your good.

*Capt.* I know you came for all our *goods*, but, by God's help, you shall have none of them; you shall not serve us as you did the Indiamen.

*Sp.* Come, my lads, let 's be gone. This fellow is not so great a fool as we took him to be.——

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## DCCLI

### TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

PASSY, 13 February, 1779.

DEAR UNCLE:—I have the pleasure of acquainting you that the Congress have been pleased to honor

me with the sole appointment to be their Minister Plenipotentiary at this court, and I have just received my credentials. This mark of public confidence is the more agreeable to me as it was not obtained by any solicitation or intrigue on my part, nor have I ever written a syllable to any person, in or out of Congress, magnifying my own services or diminishing those of others.

William Greene, Esq., present Governor of the State of Rhode Island, has sent me some bills of exchange, amounting to 1,080 livres, which he desires may be laid out in the following articles: one piece dark calico; one piece bedtick; best silk handkerchiefs and linen do; Hollands, cambrics, muslins, sewing silk, and one box of window glass, seven inches by nine. I send you the commission, and desire you to forward the things by the first good opportunity, drawing upon me for the money.

I am told you have laid aside your thoughts of going to America for the present, so that you will not have the opportunity you wished for of settling your accounts there. No resolution has been yet taken by the Commissioners here relating to your proposition of settling them by arbitration at Nantes; and though I could now perhaps do by myself what is necessary to finish the affairs in that way, yet as the transactions were in their time, it seems to me most proper that they should consent to it.[1]

I am ever your affectionate cousin,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] This Jonathan Williams was the son of Grace Harris, a niece of Dr. Franklin, and of the Jonathan Williams who presided at the meeting

## DCCLII

### TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 18 February, 1779.

SIR:—I beg you will be pleased to send me by the bearer all the public papers in your hands belonging to this department.

I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

in Faneuil Hall, held immediately after the Boston massacre of March, 1770, at which resolutions were passed requiring the British armed forces at Boston to be stationed in future outside the city. The year following, 1771, Jonathan Williams, Jr., then about nineteen years of age, was placed with his brother Josiah for a time under the care of Dr. Franklin, in London. When Franklin was appointed Commissioner of Congress near the court of France, this young man, who was in some sort of business at Nantes, was appointed Commercial Agent of Congress in that city.

He married Marianne, a daughter of William Alexander, who was born in Scotland in 1730, and who died and was buried in Woodford Co., Ky., on the farm of his son, the late Robert Alexander. Mrs. Williams' brother, afterwards Sir William Alexander, was appointed Lord Chief Baron of England, January 9, 1824, and thereupon made Privy Councillor and knighted. In January, 1831, he resigned in favor of Lord Lyndhurst, died June 29, 1842, and was buried in the chapel of Roslin Castle.

Robert Alexander, a brother of Mrs. Williams, went over from England to Paris in 1782 in charge of M. Monduit as his tutor, and lived with Dr. Franklin at Passy in 1783 and 1784. A daughter of his sister Isabella became the mother of the Earl of Bathurst.

Mr. Williams had a sister who became Mrs. Thomas Biddle, and the mother of Clement, Thomas A., and Alexander Biddle, all of Philadelphia.

William Alexander, who was buried in Kentucky, was grandfather of Mrs. General Francis P. Blair and of Apoline Alexander, who married Mr. Thompson Hankey, of London, and at one time President of the Bank of England.

Both as a relative and as an agent of Dr. Franklin's selection, young Williams naturally became an object of aversion to Arthur Lee, who endeavored to cast suspicion upon his accounts. It is to these complaints that allusion is here made.—EDITOR.

## DCCLIII

### TO M. DUMAS

PASSY, 19 February, 1779.

DEAR SIR:—Since mine of the 11th inst. I have received an appointment from Congress to be their sole Minister Plenipotentiary at this court, my former colleagues having, or being likely to have, other destinations.

I have had frequent conversations with your friend concerning a loan in Holland. A fit of the gout has interrupted them these two days, but his demands appearing to be beyond my powers, I have not agreed to them, and I question whether we can agree. I fancy he has had some information of the purport of some imprudent letter you know of, and that he thinks our necessities greater than they are. I begin to think it best to be obliged to one generous friend, and to take the little aids we want from France only.

The Marquis de Lafayette is arrived, covered with laurels. He and his suite speak very handsomely of the Americans and of the present condition of affairs. All our letters from different persons in different bodies, the Congress, the army, the government of separate States, are full of his praises. By his bravery and good conduct he appears to have gained the esteem and the affection of that whole continent.

I am with sincere regard, etc.

## DCCLIV

### FROM ARTHUR LEE

CHAILLOT, 21 February, 1779.

SIR:—Your grandson delivered to me, between 10 and 12 o'clock on the 19th, your letter dated the 18th, in which you desire I will send by the bearer all the papers belonging to this department.

I have no papers belonging to the department of Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Versailles. But if you mean, sir, the papers relating to the transactions of our late joint Commission, I am yet to learn and cannot conceive on what reason or authority any one of those who were formerly in that Commission can claim or demand possession of all the papers evidencing their transactions, in which, if they should appear to have been equally concerned, they are equally responsible.

Of these papers Mr. Deane, by his own account, has taken and secured such as he chose. The rest, a very few excepted, you have. Many of these I have never even seen, but have been favored with copies, Of the few originals in my possession there are, I know, duplicates of the most part at Passy, because it was for that reason only that I took them. The rest are necessary evidence to answer Mr. Deane's accusations, which you know to be most base and false that ever the malice and wickedness of man invented.

If it were indeed agreed that all the papers belonging to our late Commission should be brought together, numbered, docketed, and deposited where

the late Commissioners, and they only, might have access to them, I would very readily contribute the few I have. But on no other terms can I part with them, and must therefore desire you to command me in some other service.

Still, however, I am in the judgment of Congress, and if upon our mutual representations, should you think it worth troubling them with it, they should be of a different opinion, I shall abide by their decision and obey their orders.

I hope your gout is better, and have the honor to be, etc., ARTHUR LEE.

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## DCCLV

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 22 February, 1779.

DEAR SIR:—I received your proposition for removing the stumbling-block. Your constant desire of peace ought to endear you to both sides; but this proposition seems to be naturally impracticable. We can never think of quitting a solid alliance, made and ratified, in order to be in a state for receiving unknown proposals of peace, which may vanish in the discussion. The truth is, we have no kind of faith in your government, which appears to us as insidious and deceitful as it is unjust and cruel; its character is that of the spider in Thomson,

> "Cunning and fierce
> Mixture abhorred!"

Besides, we cannot see the necessity of our relinquishing our alliance with France in order to a treaty, any more than of your relinquishing yours with Holland. I am, very affectionately, yours,

N. A.[1]

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## DCCLVI

### TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 22 February, 1779.

DEAR SIR:—I received your favor of Jan. 23d, containing the answer you had received from the board of sick and hurt, in which they say they are taking measures for the immediate sending to France the number of Americans first proposed to be changed, etc. I have heard nothing since of the measures taken. The prisoners grow more and more uneasy with us. They are told that we neglect them. We sent the passport required in September last. We were soon after assured that a transport was actually taken up and victualled for one hundred men, to be sent to France with so many prisoners. That vessel has never appeared. We rely'd on the agreement to exchange, and the promise of doing it speedily. And we advised our people thereupon not to attempt escapes. We seem to have been deceived or trifled with; but perhaps it is rather owing to the multiplicity of business the board has on its hands, and your important occupations not permitting you

[1] North America. The letter was written by Dr. Franklin, but signed with these initials.

to follow it with such frequent solicitation as are necessary to keep up its attention to this particular affair. I have therefore thought of sending over a person for that purpose, impowering him to stipulate readily, without the delay attending letters. By this means I would save you some of that trouble which your goodness and humanity might otherwise continue to lead you into. I would only desire you at present to procure a safe conduct; his name is Edward Bancroft. He is a gentleman of character and honor, who will punctually observe such restrictions respecting his conduct when in England as it may be thought reasonable to lay him under. If this is or is not obtainable, I beg you will signify it by a line directed for him at M. Leveaux's, merchant in Calais; and that as soon as possible, that he may not be fruitlessly detained long there in expectation of it.

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## DCCLVII

### TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 25 February, 1779.

As the enemy seem determined upon another campaign, I beg leave to communicate and submit to your Excellency's consideration some sentiments of Congress on certain operations in North America, which they conceive to be practicable and highly advantageous to the interests both of France and the United States.

While the English continue to possess the ports of

Halifax, Rhode Island, and New York, they can—

1. Refit the ships of war they employ in those seas.

2. Defend more easily their fishery, a great nursery of seamen and source of wealth.

3. Interrupt more effectually by their cruisers the commerce between France and America, which would otherwise be so advantageous to both, and also the supplies of provisions of various kinds, which the French islands might draw from the continent.

Without a naval force, and in the present situation of their finances, the reduction of some of those posts must be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

If troops should be intended for the defence of your sugar islands, and the reduction of those of the enemy in the ensuing winter, it is supposed that a part of them, four or five thousand, convoyed by four ships of the line and a few frigates, might be advantageously employed this summer—first, by reducing (in conjunction with the troops of the Northern States) *Rhode Island.* This, it is conceived, will require no long time, and being done, those States, eased by that means, will find themselves at liberty to afford some aid of men, transports, provisions, etc., in reducing Halifax, and there is no reason to doubt their hearty good-will to concur in such an enterprise, the success of which would free their coasts from the grievous restraints under which both their commerce and their fisheries at present labor. The inhabitants of Nova Scotia, too, except those in the town of Halifax, are known to be generally well affected to the American cause, being mostly settlers who formerly emigrated from New England.

Halifax being reduced, the small forts on Newfoundland would easily follow, and by this means the enemy's fishery, not only for this year would be broken up, but rendered so precarious from the interruptions by our armed vessels, or so expensive by the force necessary to defend their fishermen, that it must soon be discouraged, diminished, and at length abandoned; their naval strength, of course, much lessened, and that of France in proportion augmented.

It is supposed that the troops, being after these northern operations refreshed in New England, and well supplied with fresh provisions, might proceed at the approach of winter for the West Indies, in good health, and fit for such service as may be required there.

The Congress had thoughts of attacking Canada this summer, and requesting some aid of ships and men for that purpose; but as their paper-money is not current in that country where hard money alone can procure provisions, which must for want of such money be brought at a vast expense from the United States, and being salted is not so good for the men, it is uncertain whether that expedition will be attempted. There is, however, to encourage it, a good disposition in the inhabitants, and if it succeeded, the fur trade and a great vent for her manufactures would be opened to France; her fisheries would be more easily protected; and the frontiers of the States being secured, their agriculture might again be pursued in those parts, and the general strength employed where the interest of the alliance might require it.

The Congress have made no mention to me of their views with regard to New York. Perhaps they hope that the enemy will abandon it, or that they shall be able to reduce it by Gen. Washington's army.

The Commissioners here had, before the treaty, the honor of making, in a memorial to your Excellency, the following proposition by order of Congress, viz.: "That in case it is agreed that the conquest of the British Sugar Islands be attempted, the United States shall, on timely notice, furnish provisions for the expedition to the amount of two millions of dollars, with six frigates manned, of not less than twenty-two guns each, with such other assistance as may be in their power, and as becoming good allies." As soon as they shall be, by the aids above-mentioned, happily freed from the embarrassments occasioned by the lodgments of the enemy on their coasts, it will be in their power to assist much more amply in such an expedition than they can at present. And I may assure your Excellency that they will do their utmost to fulfil the expectations given by that memorial, though the losses in their marine, and the depreciation of their currency since, may render it more difficult.

I need not intimate to your Excellency the great utility, if such joint operations or expeditions should be agreed to, of appointing commanders of conciliating tempers, and, if possible, who know and esteem each other, and are acquainted with both the languages. By this means the little misunderstandings apt to arise between troops of different nations might

be prevented or soon removed, and thence a greater probability of success in their enterprises.

I have the honor to be, with the utmost esteem and respect, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCLVIII

### TO VERGENNES

PASSY, 25 February, 1779.

SIR:—I received duly your Excellency's most obliging letter of the 17th inst. I was then so ill with the gout and a fever that I could neither write nor think of any thing. This necessarily prevented my attending at court to present my letters of credence on Tuesday last agreeable to his Majesty's gracious permission; but as the fit seems to be going off, I hope that in two or three days I shall be able to pay my respects to your Excellency at Versailles.

I thank your Excellency for your kind notice of the affairs of Capt. McNeill.

I have ordered the *Alliance* frigate to prepare for returning immediately to America, in order to convoy thither about fifteen sail of ships going from Nantes. As this ship is said to be an admirable swift sailer, I mention her as an opportunity by which despatches may probably go safely, if your Excellency should think fit to write by her.

With the most perfect respect I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

## DCCLIX

### TO PATRICK HENRY, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA

Passy, 26 February, 1779.

Sir:—I had the honor of receiving your Excellency's letter of March 3, 1778, by Captain Lemaire, acquainting me that the State of Virginia has desired Mr. William Lee, your agent, to procure a quantity of arms and military stores, and requesting me to assist him with my influence in obtaining them on credit.

Being glad of any opportunity of serving Virginia, and showing my regard to the request of a person whom I so highly esteem, and Mr. William Lee being absent, I found immediately three different merchants here, men of fortune, who were each of them willing to undertake furnishing the whole, and giving the credit desired. But, Mr. Arthur Lee being understood to have taken the management of the affair into his own hands, one of the three soon after refused to have any thing to do with it; a second, whose letter to me I enclose, apprehending difficulties from Mr. Lee's temper, required my name and Mr. Adams' to the agreement, which he supposes Mr. Lee did not like, as his offer was not accepted. I know not why the offer of the third was not taken. I was afterwards not at all consulted in the business.

Poor Lemaire was sent about Germany to find goods and credit, which consumed a great deal of time to little purpose. Several of the manufacturers wrote to me that they would furnish him on my promise of payment. I referred them to Mr. Lee. On his return, Mr. Lee and he differed about his

expenses. He complained frequently to me of Mr. Lee's not supplying him with necessary subsistence, and treating him with great haughtiness and insolence. I thought him really attentive to his duty, and not well used, but I avoided meddling with his affairs, to avoid, if possible, being engaged in quarrels myself. Mr. Lee, in fine, contracted with Messrs. Penet and Dacosta to supply great part of the goods. They, too, have differed, and I have several letters of complaints from those gentlemen; but I cannot remedy them, for I cannot change Mr. Lee's temper.

They have offered to send the things you want which he has refused, on my account; but, not knowing whether he has not provided them elsewhere, or in what light he may look upon my concerning myself with what he takes to be his business, I dare not meddle, being charged by the Congress to endeavor at maintaining a good understanding with their other servants, which is, indeed, a hard task with some of them. I hope, however, that you will at length be provided with what you want, which I think you might have been long since, if the affair had not been in hands which men of honor and candor here are generally averse to dealing with, as not caring to hazard quarrels and abuses in the settlement of their accounts.

Our public affairs at this court continue to go on well. Peace is soon expected in Germany, and we hope Spain is now near declaring against our enemies. I have the honor to be, with great respect, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## DCCLX

### TO VERGENNES

PASSY, 9 March, 1779.

SIR:—It is with great reluctance that I give your Excellency any further troubles on the subject of a loan of money. But the bearer, Mr. Grand, who is much better acquainted with the nature and manner of such operations than I am, being of opinion that the sum we want might, with your permission and countenance, be procured in France, I beg you would be so good as to hear him upon the subject both of the necessity of obtaining such a loan, and of the means of accomplishing it.

I am ever, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCLXI

### PASSPORTS FOR MORAVIAN VESSELS, AND FOR CAPTAIN COOK [1]

10 March, 1779.

*To All Captains and Commanders of Vessels of War, Privateers, and Letters of Marque, Belonging to the United States of America.*

GENTLEMEN:—The religious society commonly called the Moravian Brethren, having established a

[1] In the time of the American war, the Moravian Society in England sent annually a vessel to their missionaries on the coast of Labrador. The Secretary of the Society, Mr. Hutton, applied to Dr. Franklin, then American Minister in France, for a passport securing protection

mission on the coast of Labrador, for the conversion of the savages there to the Christian religion, which has already had very good effects in turning them from their ancient practices of surprising, plundering, and murdering such white people, Americans and Europeans, as, for the purpose of trade or fishery, happened to come on that coast; and persuading them to lead a life of honest industry, and to treat strangers with humanity and kindness; and, it being necessary for the support of this useful mission, that a small vessel should go thither every year to furnish supplies and necessaries for the missionaries and their converts; which vessel for the present year is a —— of about seventy-five tons, called the ——, whereof is master Captain ——

This is to request you that, if the said vessel should happen to fall into your hands, you would not suffer her to be plundered, or hindered in her voyage, but on the contrary afford her any assistance

to that vessel against American cruisers. It was readily granted, and renewed every year during the war.

When Captain Cook was expected soon to return from his last voyage round the world, Dr. Franklin issued a passport of a similar kind for protecting his vessel, in case it should be met by American cruisers. This act was afterwards properly recognized. "When Cook's 'Voyage' was printed," says W. T. Franklin, "the Admiralty Board sent a copy of the work in three volumes quarto to Dr. Franklin, accompanied with the elegant collection of plates, and a very polite letter from Lord Howe, signifying that the present was made with the king's express approbation."

One of the gold medals, struck by the Royal Society in honor of Captain Cook, was likewise sent to Dr. Franklin. In the *Life of Captain Cook*, by Dr. Kippis, the author stated that Congress disapproved and reversed the orders of Dr. Franklin; but Dr. Kippis became afterwards convinced of the error of this statement, and publicly acknowledged it.—SPARKS.

she may stand in need of; wherein I am confident your conduct will be approved by the Congress and your owners.

Given at Passy, near Paris, this —— day of ——

B. FRANKLIN.

*Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America at the Court of France.*

P. S.—The same request is respectfully made to the commanders of armed vessels belonging to France and Spain, friends of the said United States.

B. FRANKLIN.

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*To All Captains and Commanders of Armed Ships Acting by Commission from the Congress of the United States of America, now in War with Great Britain.*

GENTLEMEN:—A ship having been fitted out from England before the commencement of this war, to make discoveries of new countries in unknown seas, under the conduct of that most celebrated navigator, Captain Cook; an undertaking truly laudable in itself, as the increase of geographical knowledge facilitates the communication between distant nations, in the exchange of useful products and manufactures, and the extension of arts, whereby the common enjoyments of human life are multiplied and augmented, and science of other kinds increased to the benefit of mankind in general; this is, therefore, most earnestly to recommend to every one of

you that, in case the said ship, which is now expected to be soon in the European seas on her return, should happen to fall into your hands, you would not consider her as an enemy, nor suffer any plunder to be made of the effects contained in her, nor obstruct her immediate return to England, by detaining her or sending her into any other part of Europe or to America, but that you would treat the said Captain Cook and his people with all civility and kindness, affording them, as common friends to mankind, all the assistance in your power, which they may happen to stand in need of. In so doing you will not only gratify the generosity of your own dispositions, but there is no doubt of your obtaining the approbation of the Congress, and of your own American owners. I have the honor to be, etc.

At Passy, near Paris, this 10th day of March, 1779.

B. FRANKLIN,

*Minister Plenipotentiary from the Congress of the United States to the Court of France.*

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## DCCLXII

TO MM. HILLS, PARKES, ADAMS, DEGGE, BUCKLEY, ELWOOD, AND WARREN, OFFICERS ON BOARD THE "ALLIANCE"

PASSY, 11 March, 1779.

GENTLEMEN:—I received your letters of the 7th of February and 2d of March. The application to me either for advance of cash or payment of wages to officers in the Continental service is quite irregular,

as I am neither furnished with money nor authority for such purposes. And I believe it is the constant practice with all maritime powers to pay the ships in their service at home on their return, and not in foreign countries. I am sensible, however, of some hardships in your present circumstances relative to the high price of clothing in America, and as I respect your zeal for your country and readiness to engage in its defence, and hope I shall on those accounts be excused in doing it, I have this day, in a letter to the agent at Nantes, given leave to advance to each of you, and also to the warrant officers, a decent suit of clothing, suitable to your respective stations. But I must recommend it to you, and I flatter myself that you will not take it amiss, to be as frugal as possible for your own sakes, and not make yourselves expensively fine from a notion that it is for the honor of the States you serve. It seems not necessary that young and poor States, laboring, as at present, under the distresses of a most burdensome war in defence of their liberties, should vie in the dress of their officers with ancient and wealthy kingdoms who are in full prosperity. The honor of the States will be better supported by the prudent conduct of their officers, their harmony with each other, their ready obedience to the commands of superior officers, their reasonable and kind treatment of inferiors, and, above all, their bravery in fight and humanity to those they conquer. I am confident that you, gentlemen, have the same sentiments. If it should be in my power to do any thing further for you before you go, it will give me pleasure. But ex-

pecting daily a great number of prisoners in exchange from England, who will be in want of every thing, and our funds here being low, I doubt it can be but little. The greater advances made to the officers of the *Boston* at Bordeaux by the agent, which you mention as an example, were without orders from the Commissioners here, and were much disapproved when we saw the accounts. I wish that something handsome may fall into your hands on your return, and that you may have a happy sight of your friends and country. I am, gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCLXIII

### TO ARTHUR LEE

PASSY, 13 March, 1779.

SIR:—Finding by a note of yours on the back of Mr. Williams' accounts, dated October 6th, but which I never saw till lately by accident, expressing that you are "perfectly satisfied, from his own accounts, that Mr. Williams has now, and has long had, in his hands upwards of an hundred thousand livres belonging to the public which have not been employed in the public use," etc., I have resolved to have those accounts carefully examined by impartial persons, skilled in such business; and if you have any other objection to them than what appears in your note, or any other reasons than what appears upon the face of his accounts, for believing such a sum in

Mr. Williams' hands, I beg you will furnish me with them, that I may communicate them to the examiners. I wish justice to be done, and that you had shown your note either to Mr. Adams or me when you made it; the matter would not have been so long neglected. The money, if due, ought to be recovered immediately.

I have the honor to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—The persons I have requested to examine the accounts are the American merchants now at Nantes with our deputed commercial agent, Mr. Schweighauser.

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## DCCLXIV

TO MESSRS. W. BLAKE, D. BLAKE, J. JOHNSON, P. R. FENDALL, J. WHARTON, M. RIDLEY, I. ROSS, — LLOYD, — OGILVIE, AND J. D. SCHWEIGHAUSER, MERCHANTS NOW AT NANTES

PASSY, 13 March, 1779.

GENTLEMEN:—Great objections having been made by the Honorable Mr. A. Lee to the accounts of Mr. Jonathan Williams, late agent for the Commissioners at Nantes, which are therefore yet unsettled; and, as not being conversant in mercantile business, I cannot well judge of them, and therefore, as well as for other reasons, I did not and cannot undertake to examine them myself, and they may be better examined at Nantes where the business was transacted than either here or in America, I beg the favor of you,

gentlemen, that you would, for the sake of justice and of the public good, take that trouble upon you and make report to me thereupon; which I do hereby agree shall be conclusive and final (subject only to the revision of Congress), in case Mr. Williams shall previously sign an engagement to abide thereby; and hoping you will comply with my request, I have ordered him to lay his accounts fully before you; and I have requested the Honorable Mr. A. Lee, who makes the objections, to furnish you with the same, that, by having the whole in view, you may be able to form an equitable judgment.

I have the honor to be with great respect, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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## DCCLXV

### TO HONORABLE ARTHUR LEE, ESQ.

PASSY, 13 March, 1779.

SIR:—A severe fit of the gout, with too much business at the same time necessary to be done, has prevented till now my answering yours of the 21st past.

I did not imagine there would have been any difference of sentiment between us concerning the propriety of returning to me the papers which you have at various times taken from this house. Where several persons joined in the same commissions are to act upon papers, it seems necessary that they should be lodged in one place, where all the parties may be sure of finding them, and under the care of

one person who should be accountable for them. And if there were not some particular reasons to influence another choice, I should suppose the first person named in the commission might with great propriety take charge of them. I am sure that if you had been that person, I should have made no objection to it. Mr. Adams having a room more convenient and more private than mine, and in which he lodged, I approved of his keeping the papers; he has voluntarily returned me all he had without asking, and I thought asking was only necessary to obtain the rest from you; for the whole business, which before was transacted by us jointly, being now devolved on me, and as there must be frequent occasion to look back on letters received, memorials delivered, accounts given in, contracts made, etc., etc., which, if I cannot have the opportunity of doing, I must be frequently at a loss in future transactions. I did not imagine I should have any difficulty in obtaining them; nor had I the least idea that my asking for them would occasion any dispute.

I suppose that the papers Mr. Deane mentions to have taken and secured were those only that related to his separate commercial transactions for the public before his appointment with us in the political commission. If he took away any of the papers we were jointly concerned in, I conceive he was wrong in doing so, and that his doing wrong would not justify the rest of us in following his example. I can have no desire to deprive you of any paper that may be of use to you in answering Mr. Deane's accusations, having no concern in them nor interest

in supporting them. On the contrary, if any papers remaining in my hands can be of such use to you, you are welcome to have authenticated copies of them (which shall on request be made out for you), as well as of any others "evidencing our joint transactions" which you may desire. On the whole it seems to me that this matter may be reasonably settled by your keeping, if you please, all those originals of which there are duplicates at Passy, retaining for a time such of the rest as you desire to copy, which copies, being compared by us with the originals, may be authenticated by our joint signatures; and returning immediately all the others, docketed and catalogued, as you please, so as that you may know what and where they are, and call for a copy of any of them you may hereafter have occasion for, which shall always be given you.

If these propositions are agreed to, the affair may soon be settled; if not, I must wait the orders of Congress, and in the meantime do as well as I can with their business, which, I think, must often suffer by my want of the knowledge those papers might occasionally furnish me with.

I have the honor to be with great respect, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

END OF VOLUME VII.

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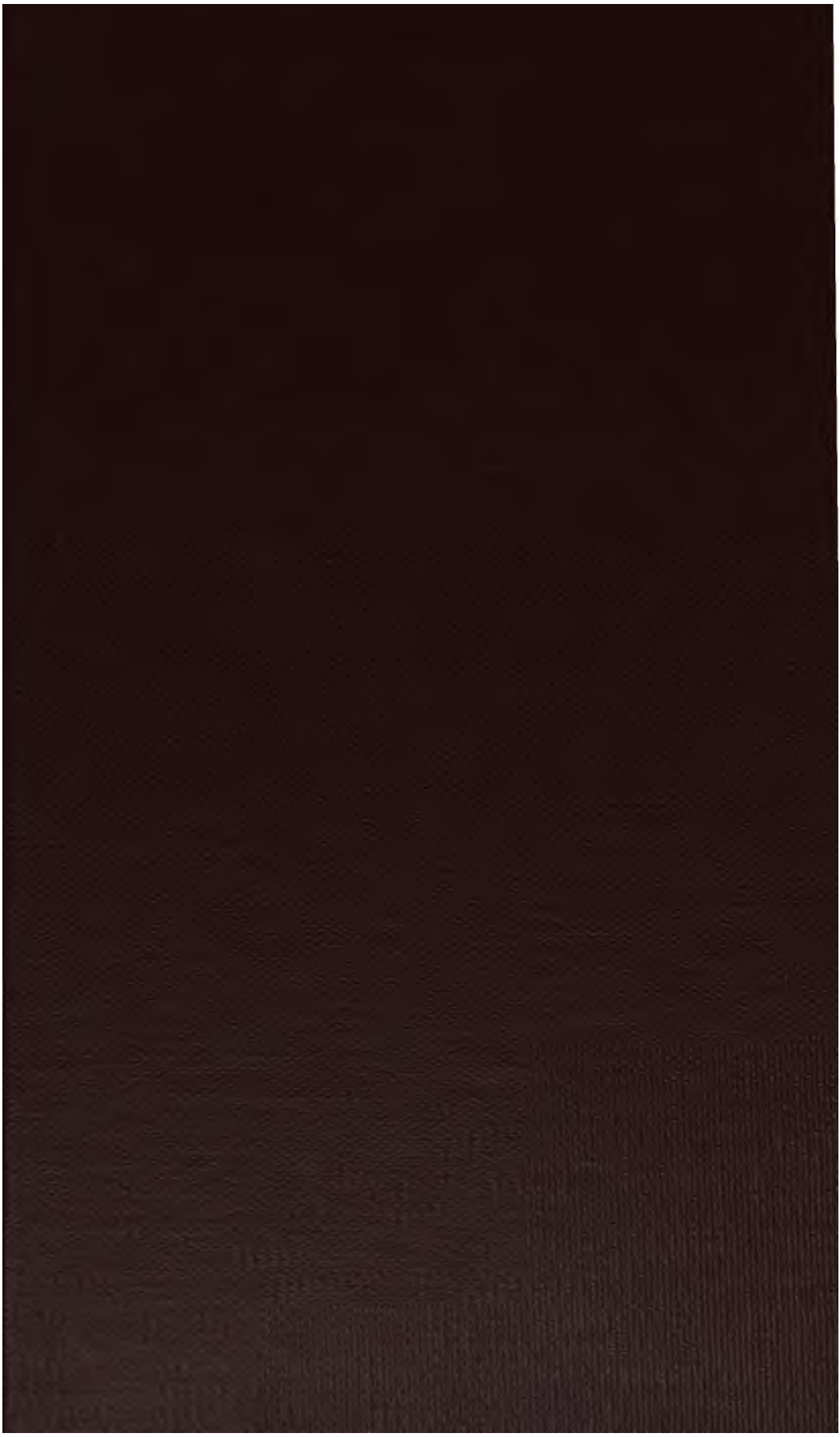
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